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S. HRG. 103-357

U.S. POLICIES TOWARD LIBERIA, TOGO, AND ZAIRE

Y 4. F 76/2: S. HRG. 103-357

U.S. Policy Toward Liberia, Togo, a...

HEARING BEFORE THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON AFRICAN AFFAIRS OF THE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS UNITED STATES SENATE ONE HUNDRED THIRD CONGRESS FIRST SESSION

—
JUNE 9, 1993
—

Printed for the use of the Committee on Foreign Relations



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U.S. POLICIES TOWARD LIBERIA, TOGO, AND ZAIRE

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 9, 1993

U.S. SENATE,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON AFRICAN AFFAIRS
OF THE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS,
Washington, DC.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 2:20 p.m. in room SD-419, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Paul Simon (chairman of the subcommittee) presiding.

Present: Senators Simon, Pell, Dodd, Kerry, Kassebaum, and Jeffords.

Senator SIMON. The subcommittee hearing will come to order.

First of all, my apologies to my colleagues. I got waylaid over on the Senate floor after the vote.

Our hearing today is about U.S. foreign policy toward Liberia, Togo, and Zaire.

In Liberia we clearly have special responsibilities. No African country has greater historic ties to this country than does Liberia, and I think we have special responsibilities also because we did not speak up forcefully as we should have when Samuel Doe took over as a dictator there. One million people are now internally displaced. You have about 600,000 who are seeking shelter in neighboring countries, and you have had tragedies there.

We will hear today from a Catholic nun about one of those tragedies, and the item that was in the newspaper just the other day about 300 Liberians being massacred, mostly women and children, 700 seriously wounded. The question is, how do we respond on that Liberian situation.

I would like to read the last two paragraphs from an editorial in the Washington Post. I will insert the full editorial in the record. The last two paragraphs say:

For much of the past 3 years, we in this country have watched the slide of Liberia as if it were an event that had no bearing on us as a Nation or on our responsibilities as a global power. During the Reagan and Bush years a handful of State Department Africa Bureau officials promoted the international fiction that the United States really cared about what went on in Liberia. The level of White House interest spoke otherwise.

The Clinton White House should reverse that policy. America's link to Liberia by that country's origins was made possible by us, by our commitment to democracy and human rights which should be manifest in Liberia, if anywhere in Africa, and by our obligation to help the survivors of this self-destruction become self-sustaining.

[The information referred to follows:]

THE SICKENING MASSACRE IN LIBERIA

(From the Washington Post, June 9, 1993)

"They cut throats, they cut heads * * * broke legs—and shot so many bullet wounds that you cannot understand why," said Augustine Mahiga, U.N. commissioner for refugees.

Mr. Mahiga's "they" are Liberians. He's referring to a raid early Sunday morning on a Liberian refugee camp in which nearly 300 civilians, mainly women and children, were slaughtered and 765 more wounded. Anyone who's followed Liberia's 3½-year-old civil war knows that the chaotic West African country is no stranger to sadistic cruelty. But this latest orgy of killing, in which 6-month-old babies were reportedly mutilated and unborn child was ripped from the murdered mother's womb, has caused Liberia to descend to perhaps lowest level of inhumanity.

The question—for Liberians, the international community and especially the United States (which helped create Liberia and plant the seeds of its current problems)—is whether that country can climb out of the hell in which it finds itself.

The blame for this latest round of senseless bloodshed is being put on the usual suspects: the forces of the National Patriotic Front of Liberia, led by U.S. prison escapee Charles Taylor. Mr. Taylor, as he does whenever he and his rebels are accused of an atrocity, has loudly and strenuously denied the charges. To hear him tell it, in the aftermath of bloody incident after bloody incident, it's always someone else who's done the dirty deed. By his account, the attacks are always a pretext for his opponents among the West African peacekeeping forces to launch an assault against his side—a side that he wants all to know is dedicated only to peace and freedom. By last count, sine Mr. Taylor and his band of rebels began their quest for a happy, tolerant and spiritually renewed Liberia on Christmas Eve 1989, close to 50,000 Liberians have lost their lives, and the country has been reduced to a condition resembling the state of nature.

For much of the past 3 years, we in this country have watched the slide of Liberia as if it were an event that had no bearing on us as a Nation or on our responsibilities as a global power. During the Reagan and Bush years a handful of State Department Africa Bureau officials promoted the international fiction that the United States really cared about what went on in Liberia. The level of White House interest spoke otherwise.

The Clinton White House should reverse that policy. America's link to Liberia by that country's origins was made possible by us, by our commitment to democracy and human rights which should be manifest in Liberia, if anywhere in Africa, and by our obligation to help the survivors of this self-destruction become self-sustaining.

Senator SIMON. I have had the opportunity to meet both with Amos Sawyer and Charles Taylor, and I had hoped that they were moving toward reconciliation. That is not evident.

To those who may be here who can communicate to Charles Taylor, let me just say, it is becoming more and more difficult to believe that Charles Taylor has nothing to do with these massacres. I am not in a position to make any final judgment, but the weight of evidence is tilting against Charles Taylor.

The question also is, what should we be doing in terms of the ECOMOG forces, in terms of assistance, but clearly the response of the United States to Liberia has to be, in my opinion, a stronger one.

The second country we will be discussing briefly here today is Togo, where steps toward democracy have been faint and few, and we would like to see that country move away from dictatorship.

Then, finally, is Zaire, which is just a mess. I do not know of any other way to describe it, and Zaire may be headed in the direction of Liberia, or worse, if constructive action is not taken.

Before I call on the witnesses, let me call on my colleagues for any opening statements they may have.

Senator KASSEBAUM. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I am very appreciative of Assistant Secretary Ambassador Moose being here, and first would just like to make a brief comment about Somalia, if I may, and the events that occurred over the weekend there.

I join with the administration and the United Nations in strongly condemning the unprovoked and very brutal attack against the U.N. peacekeepers over this past weekend. I am pleased that the United States has announced that they are sending AC-130 attack aircraft. I think we have to do all that we can possibly do to support the peacekeepers that are there.

I think in addition we should immediately arrest those who provoked the attack. This is an attack on the credibility in the long term of the United States peacekeeping efforts as well as the future of Somalia.

If I may just make a brief comment about some of the other countries, Mr. Chairman, because I am not sure that I can stay too long. Togo is a country that I have been interested in for some time, as my daughter was in the Peace Corps there.

It is a country which has great potential, and one in which we have put some substantial resources, but over the past months it has deteriorated considerably. As we look at what has been destroyed, and what was being built up and is gone now, it is just very sad.

I certainly join you, Mr. Chairman, in what you have said regarding Liberia. The devastation and the brutality there, including the recent massacre, just is shocking to everyone.

In Zaire, you have held many hearings in the past year on Zaire. I know that Ambassador Moose, you are very aware of the difficulties in Zaire. I think that we must continue working with the French and the Belgians to press for a concertive policy. Right now, there are in many ways two governments in Zaire. You have to wonder what will the outcome be.

Maybe you put it best, Mr. Chairman, when you said it is a mess, but I think surely we should not give up. There is an opportunity, I would hope, to find some constructive means of addressing it.

Thank you very much.

Senator SIMON. We thank you, Senator Kassebaum.

Senator Pell, the chairman of our full committee.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I have a statement that I would like to ask unanimous consent that it be inserted in the record.

Senator SIMON. It will be inserted in the record.

The CHAIRMAN. We in Rhode Island have a particular interest in the Liberian situation because we have so many Liberian Americans living in our State, and I will have some questions concerning their well-being as the hearing moves on and my turn comes.

[The prepared statement of Senator Pell follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SENATOR CLAIRBORNE PELL

I am very pleased that the Subcommittee on African Affairs is holding this hearing because the situation in Liberia has recently taken a dangerous turn. This is of particular concern to me because my home state of Rhode Island has a large Liberian-American population which has an enormous interest in developments in Liberia. I have spoken in private to Assistant Secretary of State George Moose, who is

here today, to convey my serious concerns regarding the crisis in Liberia. I urge the administration to be in direct contact with the Liberian-American community to get their viewpoint.

One of the critical concerns that Liberian-Americans have expressed to me is their fear for their loved ones still in Liberia and their frustration at not being able to bring them to safety. Obviously with the ongoing civil war, and the horrendous human rights abuses occurring in Liberia, some mechanism should be available to enable those who are at risk to be helped. I would like to see extraordinary compassion in such extraordinary circumstances.

We must ask ourselves how we can help find a solution to the crisis in Liberia. Last Sunday's massacre of 300 innocent refugees outside Monrovia is one of the most vicious displays of malevolence the African continent has seen. I have strongly supported the efforts of the West African States Economic Community's Monitoring Group, ECOMOG, to try to bring about a peace settlement. However, members of the Liberian-American community have suggested to me that further efforts may be needed, and that it may be time to bring the United Nations more fully into the peace process.

The situation in Liberia has languished far too long, and after stagnating for months, now has begun to deteriorate seriously. We need to respond strongly to the recent atrocities committed against the refugees there. It is time to focus the spotlight of the international community on Liberia.

Senator SIMON. We are very pleased to welcome Assistant Secretary of State George Moose. We seem to pile the problems on you, but you knew that when you accepted this position.

Mr. Secretary, we welcome hearing from you.

STATEMENT OF HON. GEORGE MOOSE, ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR AFRICAN AFFAIRS, DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Secretary MOOSE. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. It has indeed been a very difficult week to be in this position, difficult, I think, for all people who are concerned—

Senator SIMON. Can you pull the microphone a little closer to you?

Secretary MOOSE. Yes. It has indeed been a difficult week for us, those of us who have been concerned about developments in Africa. Certainly the developments over the weekend both in Somalia and Liberia have given us great cause for concern.

I appreciate very much, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, this opportunity to appear before you again, this time to testify on our policies toward Liberia, Togo, and Zaire. I have a statement which if you will not mind I will just read briefly from it, because I know the time is short, and I would like an opportunity to try to respond to your questions.

I think the situations in those three countries represent different stages of development of two key evolutions which we see taking place on the continent. One, of course, is the evolution toward democracy, the other is the consequences of conflict situations which emerged out of past years.

Transition to democracy in Togo has reached a stalemate which we are concerned could have very serious consequences for the future, but at the same time we are encouraged by the fact that talks and negotiations are still ongoing.

In Zaire, President Mobutu's refusal to relinquish power and to cease his interference with the institutions of the transition Government goes well beyond simply thwarting the transition to democracy. It puts Zaire, we think, in a very precarious preconflict status.

The challenge in Liberia is to try, notwithstanding the recent events, to secure a peace and movement toward democracy and the rehabilitation of that country. In Liberia, we were all shocked by the brutal atrocities which were reported over the weekend, the massacre of over 250—indeed, latest reports suggest as many as 400 people on June 6 at a camp for displaced persons on the Firestone plantation near Harbel.

We, in our statements, have expressed our outrage and dismay at that attack. But we also believe that the attack underscores the need to continue to support the efforts of the United Nations and of ECOWAS to bring an end to this tragic conflict, and our policy remains focused on the same key objectives we have had in the past.

We seek a negotiated settlement with the assistance of the United Nations, and the Economic Community of West African States which would involve the full disarmament of all the Liberian warring factions. The return home of more than a million displaced Liberians, free and fair internationally monitored elections, and the establishment of a unified Government based on respect for human rights, democratic principles and accountability.

We believe that the West African peacekeeping force, ECOMOG, has borne the major financial burden for maintaining the peace in Liberia. We know that the six contributing countries of ECOMOG look forward to concluding their mission and bringing their troops home, and we believe that U.S. assistance to ECOMOG very much serves the interest both of Liberia and of the United States.

We were encouraged by recent efforts by the U.N. Secretary-General Special Envoy, Mr. Trevor Gordon-Somers, to reconvene the discussions in order to discuss in greater detail the further implementation of the Yamoussoukro Accords. I had an opportunity to speak with Mr. Gordon-Somers just last Friday. At that point he was on his way to Bamako, Mali, where he hoped to lay the groundwork for a meeting of the leaders of the principal Liberian factions that he hoped to be able to convene before the end of the month.

One of the other unfortunate consequences of the weekend's events is that he has had to return now to Monrovia in order to respond to an urgent request to lead an inquiry into the weekend's events. But I am confident that he remains determined to pursue efforts to reconvene a meeting which would involve the offer of the Secretary-General to host such a meeting.

We have strongly encouraged and supported that effort, and will continue to do so. At the same time, I would simply add that we continue to urge support for ECOMOG. We believe that in due course it will be important to have a complementary presence of the United Nations in order to provide that needed element of assurance and confidence to all of the parties that in fact the Yamoussoukro Accords will be implemented fairly and objectively and that no party need be unduly concerned about the manner in which that accord is implemented.

That remains the essence of our policy, Mr. Chairman. I would be happy to discuss with you and other members of the committee details of it.

Turning to Togo, the people of Togo launched a process toward multiparty democracy in July of 1991 with a national conference and a schedule for transition to a democratic government selected in free and fair elections. However, over the past year, that transition has disintegrated under the pressure of intimidation and violence.

Members of the transitional government and the high council of the republic have been held hostage and abused by elements of the military. Their homes have been fire-bombed; opposition political leaders have been shot, and, in one case, killed; press offices and personnel have been assaulted, and unarmed opposition demonstrators have been fired on by military forces.

In response to these events, there were acts of revenge and defiance against the military and the ruling party on the part of opposition groups, and that included mob killings of some soldiers, attacks on the homes of ruling party officials, and an armed raid on the military quarters which allegedly was conducted by members of the opposition.

The result is an atmosphere of fear and insecurity which reigns, certainly in the capital, Lome, and throughout much of the rest of the country. Togo's economic life has been essentially paralyzed since last November by a general strike called by the opposition unions and politicians to protest the breakdown of the transition process.

Over 200,000 Togolese citizens have fled the country since January of 1993. Their flight was triggered by security force attacks on opposition neighborhoods in Lome. Those who fled, including most of the significant leaders of the political opposition, remain outside of Togo, primarily in neighboring Benin and in Ghana. There is concern that the ongoing crisis will affect regional as well as domestic stability.

Against this backdrop, President Eyadema and his supporters announced elections to be held on June 20. Unfortunately, those elections were called without full participation or consultation with major elements of the opposition.

In the absence of a mutually agreed framework, the coalition of opposition political parties announced its intention to boycott those elections and called on the Togolese electorate to do the same. However, behind the scenes—and I think here we have to credit French diplomatic initiatives over the last couple of weeks—there has continued to be an effort to bring all of the various parties back into a negotiation.

On June 1, the government announced a 15-day delay in the scheduled elections, which was at least an acknowledgement that the period that was allowed was inadequate and insufficient. During this delay, it is hoped that the talks with the opposition parties can resume with the aim of reaching agreement for elections so that the process, the transition process can move forward.

Our view remains that the elections, to be meaningful, will require very careful consultation and preparation. Throughout the transition, we have maintained a continuous dialog with all the sides in Togo. Most recently, I met with the Togolese foreign minister who is now in town. We have maintained our contacts as well with members of the political opposition in Togo.

In responding to the military's intimidation tactics, the United States has suspended much of its assistance to Togo. That which remains is assistance which is channeled through private organizations in order to meet the basic human needs of the Togolese population.

Our actions mirror those taken by other key donor countries, including the French and the Economic Community, donors which have historically provided the bulk of Togo's foreign assistance and whose lead we have been following primarily in the Togolese situation.

We have consulted widely with those actively engaged in the diplomacy, and we have sought wherever possible to be supportive. I met most recently with senior representatives of the French Government and discussed ways in which we might be supportive of the initiatives they have taken in recent weeks.

I can say that we are somewhat more optimistic in light of the recent developments and particularly the proposed resumption of discussions in Ouagadougou. We hope the talks will begin sometime this week and that a way around the current impasse in Togo may be found.

We remain, for our part, willing to support and assist in the organization of elections in Togo, provided they meet that critical test of being well-organized and well-prepared. In our view, that means that there will have to be a process of consultation and negotiation that involves most, if not all, of the major parties.

I might turn, then, to Zaire. Zaire, Africa's third largest country, faces what in our view is an increasingly dangerous crisis, one that threatens the livelihood of over 40 million Zaireans and the stability of neighboring countries. There is no doubt about the cause of the problem. It is, indeed, President Mobutu's refusal to honor his promise to permit a democratic transition process to proceed.

The results include a near total breakdown of Zaire's modern economic sector, rampant hyperinflation, growing malnutrition in Kinshasa itself, and—most notably—in Shaba Province, a pernicious pattern of government-provoked or tolerated violence against minority ethnic groups.

Because of the regime's increasing use of intimidation against political opponents, there has been a sharp escalation of human rights abuses in recent months.

The current crisis in Zaire is in part a tragic consequence of the Cold War era when policies of the United States and its allies were strongly influenced by broader, so-called strategic interests, often to the detriment of other considerations. I think it is fair to say that our concept of what is strategic is no longer what it was. Today, it centers on support for democratization and sustainable development.

In Zaire, we are encouraging a constructive change through a combination of pressure on the current regime and a clear offer of help for the establishment of a democratic successor Government. We support the democratic transition established by the national conference. We do not support any particular Zairean party or individual.

We are working with the Belgians and the French to increase political and economic pressure through a range of measures, includ-

ing visa restrictions, prohibition on arms exports, and public statements. Additional measures which have been discussed with our allies and which I would prefer not to discuss in great detail here in this open session are currently under active consideration.

As we look toward Zaire's future, it is clear that any resolution of the current tragedy will require rapid deployment of both bilateral and multilateral resources. There will be, I think, two immediate requirements. One is a requirement for military reform.

I think it is clear that no democratic transition will be sustainable until the present regime's relatively well-armed and well-trained troops are brought under civilian control through a combination of military reform and demobilization. Otherwise they will obstruct that transition, repeating a tragic pattern which we have seen elsewhere, including, currently, in Liberia.

Diffusing this problem will demand, I think, a multilateral effort, but the United States must be ready to participate with appropriate levels of assistance for the demobilization and reform process.

The second and equally pressing need will, of course, be a need for economic stabilization and reform. We, with the French and Belgians, told the Government of Zaire in January that we were willing to provide support for stabilization and reform under clearly defined circumstances. These include a credible plan for elections and strict controls to deny President Mobutu unimpeded access to public funds and to ensure the management of those public funds.

Working with the IMF and the World Bank, we determined that the crucial first stages of such a program could in large part be financed by the proper use of funds which are already available but which are currently being diverted for personal use.

The second phase, and the longer, more arduous phase, will involve a pattern of economic reform, debt rescheduling, new development investment, and I think a multidonor support similar to that undertaken by many other countries, and certainly not beyond the capabilities of Zaire once a reform-oriented administration is in place.

In short, we believe that the situation in Zaire is indeed at a very critical stage. We hope, through a combination of pressure and public diplomacy, as well as a continuing effort to support the legitimate institutions that emerge from the national conference and the support for meaningful diplomatic efforts, whether they be through bilateral or through the United Nations, that we can still encourage a process that will get us beyond the current impasse and that will allow us to achieve a solution. While we are concerned, we are not entirely without some hope for a solution in Zaire.

I think there, Mr. Chairman, I will end my comments and make myself available for your comments and questions.

[The prepared statement of Secretary Moose follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF GEORGE E. MOOSE, ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE FOR
AFRICAN AFFAIRS

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee: I appreciate the opportunity to testify before you again—this time on developments in—and U.S. policy towards Liberia, Togo and Zaire.

The situations in the three countries represent different stages of two major issues with which Africa is currently dealing: democratization and conflict. The transition to democracy in Togo has reached a stalemate which could have serious repercussions. But we understand that talks continue. Mobutu's refusal to relinquish power to the high council goes beyond thwarting transition to democracy in Zaire; it puts Zaire in a preconflict status. The challenge now in Liberia is to secure peace and move to democracy and rehabilitation in that country.

I would like to discuss each of these in some detail:

LIBERIA

In Liberia, we have been shocked by a brutal new atrocity—the massacre of over 250 civilians on June 6 at a camp for displaced persons on the Firestone rubber plantation near Harbel. The United States condemns this deplorable act, which underscores the need to support UN and ECOWAS efforts to bring an end to this tragic war. U.S. policy remains focused on clear and longstanding objectives. We seek a negotiated settlement with the assistance of the UN and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), full disarmament of all Liberian warring factions, the return home of more than one million displaced Liberians, free and fair internationally-monitored elections, and the establishment of a unified government based on respect for human rights, democratic principles and economic accountability.

The West African peacekeeping force known as ECOMOG has borne the major financial burden for maintaining peacekeeping forces in Liberia, but the six contributing nations look forward to concluding their mission and bringing their troops home. U.S. assistance to this endeavor serves all of our interests.

The ECOWAS initiative offers an appropriate and cost-effective alternative to calls for massive UN intervention. The ECOWAS consensus which was skillfully hammered out in more than 20 summit meetings on Liberia enjoys strong support from the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the UN. In two recent resolutions, the Security Council, with our strong support, has unanimously endorsed the ECOWAS effort in Liberia. As we have seen elsewhere in Africa and the world, international consensus does not necessarily guarantee cooperation by all parties. In Liberia, however, the regional initiative, supported by the OAU and the UN, offers by far the best prospect for achieving a settlement that will restore peace and stability to Liberia and the immediate subregion.

We believe the UN can play an important role as a catalyst to get negotiations restarted. UN Special Representative Trevor Gordon-Somers has been carrying out an intensive, 6-week round of negotiations in the region, and we support his efforts to lay the groundwork for a meeting of factions under auspices of the UN Secretary General. The UN can play an important complementary role in support of the existing regional effort.

Many obstacles must be overcome. Liberian faction leaders have proven unreliable and their troops undisciplined. An even-handed approach to disarmament of all factions, backed up by convincing military power, will be needed to ensure compliance. We do not believe a military solution is possible or desirable, but we recognize that continuing pressure is an inescapable part of the equation for peace in Liberia.

While supporting ongoing diplomatic efforts, the United States continues to respond to the humanitarian needs of the Liberian people. The relief effort is one of the great unsung success stories of averting greater tragedy in Africa. In addition to almost \$29 million in support for the regional peacekeeping, the United States has provided almost \$260 million in humanitarian aid for victims of the conflict, far more than all other donors combined. We continue to stress the need for distribution throughout Liberia, urging ECOMOG to facilitate up-country assistance and Charles Taylor to end his resistance to cross-line deliveries.

While meeting the immediate needs of Liberians, we must also be poised to foster and support moves to build a lasting peace. We are prepared to assist with repatriation, demobilization, and the holding of free and fair elections when conditions allow. We have requested funds in FY 94 to assist the peacekeeping efforts of ECOWAS in Liberia. In the post-cold-war world, our concern for the Liberian people and our desire for peace is unconstrained by strategic necessities; we seek a future relationship based on fundamental principles of human rights, accountability and democracy. Liberia's neighbors, the United States and the UN have all signalled their readiness to assist, and we are all providing tangible support, but ultimately it will be the people of Liberia themselves who must resolve to make the most of their opportunity and chart the future of this nation.

TOGO

The people of Togo launched a process toward multiparty democracy in July 1991 with a national conference and a schedule for transition to a democratic government selected in free, fair, representative elections. However, over the past year, that transition has disintegrated under the pressure of intimidation and violence. Members of the transitional government and the high council of the republic have been held hostage and abused by members of the military. Their homes have been firebombed, and opposition political candidates shot and; in one case, killed. Opposition press offices and personnel have been assaulted, and unarmed opposition demonstrators fired on by military forces. In response to those events, there were acts of revenge and defiance against the military and the ruling party of President Eyadema, including mob killings of soldiers, attacks on the homes of ruling party officials, and an armed nighttime raid on the military headquarters.

The result is an atmosphere of fear and insecurity which reigns in the capital, Lome, and throughout much of the country. Togo's economic life has been essentially paralyzed since November by a general strike, called by opposition unions and politicians to protest the breakdown of the transition. Over 200,000 Togolese citizens have fled the country since January 1993. Their flight was triggered by security force attacks on opposition neighborhoods in Lome. Those who fled, including almost all significant members of the political opposition, remain outside Togo, primarily in neighboring Benin and Ghana. There is concern that the ongoing crisis will affect regional as well as domestic stability.

Against this backdrop, President Eyadema and his supporters announced elections beginning June 20. Unfortunately, these elections were called without full participation of major elements of the opposition. In the absence of a mutually agreed framework, the coalition of opposition political parties announced its intention to boycott the elections and called on the Togolese electorate to do the same. However, behind the scenes efforts, primarily led by the French, have continued to work toward bringing all sides back to the negotiating table. On June 1, the government announced a 15-day delay in the election schedule. During this delay, it is hoped that talks with the opposition can resume with the aim of reaching agreement among all parties for elections to move forward. Our view remains that elections, to be meaningful, will require careful preparation.

Throughout the transition, we have maintained a continuous dialog with all sides in Togo, urging compromise and conciliation as the only means to move Togo forward on the road to democracy. Responding to the military's intimidation tactics, the United States has suspended much of its assistance. In the remaining projects, we work primarily through private voluntary organizations to meet basic human needs. Our actions mirror those of the French, the Germans and the EEC, donors who have historically provided the bulk of Togo's foreign assistance and whose lead we are following with regard to Togo.

We are consulting regularly with Togo's friends abroad in an effort to ensure that a unified, clear message is sent to all Togolese parties: we will not return to business as usual until the transition is back on track. In line with that policy, we have announced that the United States will not provide electoral support or observers for the unilaterally arranged and announced elections beginning June 20. In the wake of the new effort to negotiate, we are cautiously optimistic that Togo's impasse can be broken. We are following closely preparations for imminent talks in Ouagadougou. Should those talks result in a mutually agreed framework for free, fair elections held in a secure environment, we will reevaluate our decision concerning electoral observers and assistance. In the meantime, we will continue to consult with all sides, urging them to take advantage of this opportunity to move Togo back to path of democracy.

ZAIRE

Africa's third largest country faces an increasingly dangerous crisis, one that threatens the livelihood of 40 million Zairians and the stability of neighboring countries. There is no doubt about the cause of the problem. It is President Mobutu's stubborn refusal to honor his promise to permit a democratic transition process to proceed. The results include a near total breakdown of Zaire's modern economic sector, rampant hyperinflation, growing malnutrition in Kinshasa itself, and, most notably in Shaba, a pernicious pattern of government-provoked or tolerated violence against minority ethnic groups. Because of the regime's increasing use of intimidation against political opponents, there has been a sharp escalation of human rights abuse in recent months.

The current crisis in Zaire is in part a tragic consequence of the cold war era, when policies of the United States and its allies were strongly influenced by broader strategic interests, often to the detriment of other considerations. Our concept of

what is "strategic" is no longer what it was. Today it centers on support for democratization and sustainable development. In Zaire, we are encouraging constructive change through a combination of pressure on the current regime, and a clear offer of help for the establishment of a democratic successor government. We support the democratic transition established by the national conference, not any particular Zairian party or individual. We are working with the Belgians and French to increase political and economic pressure through a range of measures, including visa restrictions, prohibition of arms exports, and public statements. Additional measures, which I would prefer not to discuss in open session, are under active consideration.

As we look toward Zaire's future, it is clear that any resolution of the current tragedy will require rapid deployment of both bilateral and multilateral resources. There will be two immediate requirements. One is military reform. No democratic transition will be sustainable until the present regime's relatively well-armed and well-trained troops are brought under civil control through a combination of military reform and demobilization. Otherwise, they will obstruct the transition, repeating a tragic pattern played out in Liberia. Defusing this problem will demand a multilateral effort, but the United States must be ready to participate with appropriate levels of assistance for the demobilization and reform process.

The second and equally pressing need will of course be economic stabilization and reform. We, the French, and the Belgians told the Government of Zaire in January that we are willing to provide support for stabilization and reform under clearly defined conditions. These include a credible plan for elections and strict controls to deny President Mobutu unimpeded access to public funds and the management of public finances. Working with the IMF and the World Bank, we determined that the crucial first stages of such a program could be in large part financed by proper use of the funds which are currently being diverted for unauthorized personal use. The second phase, longer and more arduous, will involve a pattern of economic reform, debt rescheduling, new development investment, and multidonor support similar to that undertaken by many other countries, and certainly not beyond the capability of Zaire once a reform-oriented administration is in place.

In short, while we believe that the situation in Zaire is critical, it is not beyond hope. We are determined to play a leadership role in the international effort which will be required to achieve a solution.

Thank you. I look forward to your comments and questions.

Senator SIMON. Thank you. We will place your full statement in the record. On Zaire, I think the best part of your statement was the statement, if I am quoting you correctly, that additional measures are under active consideration.

Senator Kassebaum and I have been pushing for a stronger stand on Zaire for some time back in the previous administration. My own impression is that our response in Zaire has been too passive, that we shake our heads and say, it is terrible what is happening, but that we have not been doing anything.

I frankly do not know what additional measures are under active consideration, and I would be pleased to be briefed by you on that, but I think it is time, past time for additional measures to see that there is change there.

On Togo, my hope is that something can work out.

One of the untold stories of Africa is that democracy really is catching on in Africa. I would like to see the leadership of Togo move in the direction that Zambia, for example, moved, where President Kaunda, who had a one-party State and dominated it, permitted a free election, and his party got only 15 percent of the vote, but he gracefully stepped aside and let democracy operate.

In Liberia, we face a very, very tough situation. First of all, on this most recent massacre of 300 or however many people were killed—as high as 400, you indicated in your statement—it is very difficult to believe that Charles Taylor's forces cannot have had a part in that.

I drove past that old former plantation. That is in Charles Taylor's territory. I have no evidence beyond knowing that.

Are we ready to make any kind of judgments as to who is responsible for this massacre?

Secretary MOOSE. No, Mr. Chairman, we are not. We have sifted through all of the reporting that has come in, including the report of the U.N. High Commission for Refugees' representative in Liberia, who was among the first to visit the site.

His report does include some of the results of his initial interviews with some of the victims. He reports that many of those victims, some of those victims alleged that representatives of the NPLF were involved, but even his report I think acknowledges that those allegations are not at this point confirmable.

I think many of us find it hard not to reach some conjectures in our own minds about what may have happened there, based on an appalling record over the last several years, but I think it is also fair to say the record in Liberia shows that many of the elements present there have been capable over the years of similar kinds of appalling acts.

We only hope and trust that the inquiry that Mr. Gordon-Somers is now going to lead will give us some clearer indication as to who may have been responsible. We have certainly urged that whoever is responsible, that the leaders of those movements, also be held accountable for the actions of their followers.

Senator SIMON. As I understand, the ECOMOG forces have requested that the arms embargo to Liberia be reinforced. Are any steps being made along that line?

Secretary MOOSE. This is an issue that I know was discussed at the last meeting of the U.N. Security Council on Liberia. There was a view held by many that indeed an action on the part of the United Nations in essence to endorse more formally the arms embargo that ECOWAS put in place might be useful. That action was not taken at the time, although as I recall the U.N. Security Council resolution did call on member States to respect provisions of that arms embargo.

I think for all intents and purposes the necessary probably is being done. I think what we still need to do and what we are still concerned about are reports that arms still continue to move into various parts of Liberia. I can say that we continue to have a very close dialog with some of the leaders of countries in the region with a view to trying to ensure a tighter control and a greater respect for that embargo.

Senator SIMON. What do we hear from the Secretary-General's special representative in Liberia? Are we getting regular reports? What do they indicate?

Secretary MOOSE. Certainly our Embassies and our missions in the field have been in regular contact with Mr. Gordon-Somers over the last several weeks as he has attempted to carry out the mandate he was given by the Secretary-General, and that mandate was to try to convene the leaders of the various factions with a view to resuming a discussion of the implementation of the Yamoussoukro Accords.

I had occasion to speak with Mr. Gordon-Somers only last Friday morning. At that point he was en route to Bamako, Mali, where he

hoped to lay the groundwork for the convening of such a meeting. That was on the basis of contacts which he has had over the last several weeks with all of the representatives of all of the factions, and his conclusion, based on those contacts, that in fact they were all prepared to attend such a meeting.

Again, one of the unfortunate consequences of this weekend's events is that that meeting, or at least the preparations of it, seem now to be put off by at least another few days. As I said earlier, I remain confident that Mr. Gordon-Somers will not be distracted permanently from that task and that he does seek within the next few days, or within the next couple of weeks, to try to bring those leaders together.

Senator SIMON. You mentioned that in due course a complementing force of the United Nations might be there. I think that is a correct quote from your statement.

One of my concerns, frankly, is that we are just kind of, you know, we hold a hearing and we talk about it a little bit, and then it disappears from the limelight, and we are kind of doing a toe dance around the problems in Liberia rather than really addressing the problems as forcefully as we should.

You know, it is better to have no answer than the wrong answer, but I guess I would be interested in having from the administration and then having a dialog about it maybe a three or four or five-point program, what are we going to do, and then put time lines on it.

For example, in due course a complementary force of the United Nations. Does that mean 1 month? Does that mean 1 year? Does that mean 3 years? Let us be as specific as we can, and really see what can be done.

Finally, the West African States are facing economic problems as a result of all of this. What are we doing in terms of indicating any greater degree of economic support? I can see, for example, that Nigeria, which now shoulders the bulk of the burden here, might very well just get tired and just give up on Liberia. What are we doing to indicate that we sense their problems, and that we are going to provide greater assistance?

Secretary MOOSE. Let me try to give at least a partial answer to your first question, Mr. Chairman. We have been consulting very closely with the U.N. on its plans, and I think those plans do include some fairly definite time lines, not that anyone can guarantee that those time lines will be met or respected, but it does indicate, I think, the sense of urgency in Zaire on the part of the U.N. which we share to try to bring these negotiations to a conclusion.

I think we all reckoned that there was a kind of window here. On the one hand, since last October, when Mr. Taylor's forces attacked Monrovia and upset the fragile cease-fire that had been in existence, ECOMOG has been able to reassert security around Monrovia and indeed secure some other very strategic points. That has, we think, applied a certain degree necessary pressure, on Mr. Taylor in ways that we had hoped would encourage him to think more seriously about a negotiation.

At the same time, as you point out, there is a desire on the part of the ECOWAS countries that have been bearing this burden, to look toward a conclusion, to the point where they can in fact say

that their mission is completed and they can bring their troops home. Take those two factors together, and I think that has defined the parameters of Mr. Gordon-Somers plan.

His hope was, indeed, following on the mandate he was given by the Secretary-General, to convene a meeting this month, a preliminary meeting of the leaders of the factions, at which it was his hope that they would agree, or reaffirm their agreement to the implementation of the Yamoussoukro Accords and perhaps to find some specific steps that would be necessary to produce that.

On the basis of that, his hope was to return to New York to present his report and his findings to the Security Council and seek the council's endorsement for the subsequent steps that would be necessary. As he currently envisages it, those steps would be an augmentation of the current ECOMOG presence in order to ensure that there was adequate force on the ground to carry out the remaining steps, including the cantonment and demobilization of the various military elements as well as then to begin the process of preparing the elections.

It would be at that stage, I think, that the Security Council would need, with our support and the support of other members, to endorse that plan and to provide or assure the resources necessary to carry it out.

The other element of that would be the suggestion in his earlier report of a U.N. observer presence to provide that added measure of confidence to all the parties that this arrangement would be carried out impartially, and I think, taking those steps realistically, he is looking at a phasing of those various steps so that by the first of September one might, indeed, actually begin the implementation.

All of that, however, still remains contingent on some sense of agreement on the part of the parties. This, of course, has been the most elusive element in this equation in the past.

I think what frustrates us all is that ultimately it is hard to impose a solution on parties who remain resistant to such a settlement. The options in the face of that are not terribly palatable to anybody, nor do we believe they are terribly promising in terms of what results they would produce.

We have, as I said, talked to the U.N., to Mr. Gordon-Somers on a number of repeated occasions. I think his plan makes sense, and I think what we have been trying to do, along with many others, is to give him all the support that we possibly can to move toward a solution.

With regard to your second point, we have been very conscious of that the countries of ECOWAS, and I would say particularly in Nigeria, have been bearing the burden of this major peacekeeping operation in Liberia and conscious of that their effort is one that contributes not only to the interests of the States in West Africa but frankly to the larger interests of the international community.

In that regard it has always been our view that we should look for ways to try to be supportive of their actions. It was for that reason that in the context of the administration's recent budget proposal we had requested a rather modest, but I hope significant sum in the context of the voluntary peacekeeping operations account, the purpose of which would be to enable us to make a contribution

to a voluntary fund to which we hope others might be willing to contribute.

I have had an opportunity to talk to other representatives of other nations as well, and sense that there would be such a willingness, to contribute to that fund to defray at least some of the costs currently being borne by the contributors to ECOWAS.

We will continue to explore with our Defense Department the possibilities of being able to provide items in kind for the contributors of ECOMOG, which again perhaps would help to defray some of the burden that they are now carrying, but your point is well-taken. I think we need to recognize that if ECOMOG were not there and doing the jobs they are doing, that we would have to do it in other ways, and that probably those ways would be far more expensive than the manner in which it is being done now.

Senator SIMON. Senator Pell.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Am I correct in saying that the majority of the U.N. occupying force in Liberia are from Nigeria?

Secretary MOOSE. That is correct, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Am I correct in saying that the impression that I got in talking with some of the Liberians was they resent some of the Nigerians in particular and would prefer troops from Europe? Is that correct?

Secretary MOOSE. I would be hard-pressed to characterize the general view of all Liberians. I think the view of our embassy in Monrovia is that the majority of the Liberians are appreciative of the fact that but for the ECOMOG presence, which includes, obviously, Nigerians, the security situation in Liberia currently would be very dangerous and very difficult.

That is not to say that there have not been some hard feelings against the presence of ECOMOG troops, and perhaps against Nigerian troops, but I think frankly our estimate is that were they not there, the situation on the ground in Liberia would be extremely dangerous and difficult for the majority of Liberians.

The CHAIRMAN. But you would concur that it would be better if they were not Nigerians who were there.

Secretary MOOSE. I do not think the Nigerians wish to be there simply to be there. I think they are there because a lot of people have encouraged and implored them to remain. If there were options, I would be happy to look at those options, but I have to say at the moment I do not see a great rush on the part of the Europeans or United Nations or others to assume that role and that responsibility.

The CHAIRMAN. As I mentioned earlier, we have quite a Liberian community in my State, and Representative Joseph Newsome, who headed up the group there and brought over—I think we have 62 students from Liberia now in Rhode Island, so the interest in my State is very real indeed, and very concerned.

Have you been in touch here in the Department with any of the Liberian American community directly with regard to their concerns?

Secretary MOOSE. I have been in touch personally, and I know that members of my bureau are regularly in touch with members

of the Liberian community here in the United States, which is a very large and a very diverse one.

The CHAIRMAN. Am I correct in saying the largest such community is in Rhode Island?

Secretary MOOSE. You are putting me a bit on the spot, Mr. Chairman. I could not testify to that, but I know there is a very important one.

The CHAIRMAN. There are a lot there.

Secretary MOOSE. There are a lot there in Rhode Island.

The CHAIRMAN. What is the State Department doing to gather and provide information on relatives of Liberian Americans who may be missing as a result of the recent massacre? This is a problem we face, and they naturally call my office in Providence and want to know what is happening to their brother, or aunt, or niece.

Secretary MOOSE. Mr. Chairman, I do not have a specific response to your question, a detailed response. I know that from my own experience when I was in Dakar recently, our consular section spent a fair amount of time trying to identify members of separated families. I have no doubt that that effort continues whenever we are called upon to do it.

I know that other organizations as well have been involved in that effort, and particularly the ICRC, and we have worked in cooperation with them.

The CHAIRMAN. Does the ICRC have a pretty large presence in Liberia or not?

Secretary MOOSE. I know they have a presence in Liberia. How large it is, I cannot tell you at this time, but I would be happy to find out.

The CHAIRMAN. Maybe you could let us know.

Secretary MOOSE. I would be happy to do that. The ICRC operation in Liberia is composed of ten expatriate and 50 to 60 local staff. They are providing medical assistance and visiting those people detained in connection with the conflict.

The CHAIRMAN. What action do you believe the United States could take to help identify and punish the people who are responsible for the horrible massacres?

Secretary MOOSE. Well, we sincerely hope that the investigation which the U.N. is currently carrying out will give us some better indication as to who may have been responsible for this.

I have to be, however, candid in saying in a number of instances in the past it has not been possible to demonstrate conclusively the responsibility for these incidents, but we do hope that it will be possible, as a result of that investigation, to have a better sense of who is responsible, and as I have indicated, our view is that those who are responsible should be held accountable, that they should indeed be brought to justice, and indeed that the responsibility of their higher-ups ought to be investigated fully as well.

The CHAIRMAN. Is it correct to say that this last massacre was just one in a series of massacres?

Secretary MOOSE. Again, the record will show that there have been, alas, all too many similar kinds of incidents in the past. We have, as others have, received numerous reports of incidents taking place in areas beyond the control of ECOMOG, and as a result, in-

cidents which it has not been possible to thoroughly investigate and follow up on. That is of concern.

I guess my response basically comes back to the fact that until we can see the outlines of a political solution here, I fear that we will find it very difficult to trace and to track down the origins and the perpetrators of these kinds of incidents. I think the effort that we would like to see go forward and which we again are supporting as vigorously as we can is an effort to resume the political dialog with a view to creating the conditions that would lead to an end to these kinds of confrontations and lead to restoration of something that could meaningfully be called an administration and a government.

The CHAIRMAN. The big divisions that used to occur were those between the descendants of those who had never left Africa and the descendants of those who settled from the United States. Are they about half and half in quantity?

Secretary MOOSE. I am sorry, in terms of proportion?

The CHAIRMAN. Are they about half and half, the number of people in Liberia, Liberians who are descended from returned slaves from America, as opposed to those who were descended from Africans?

Secretary MOOSE. My understanding is the percentage of so-called Americo-Liberians was a relatively small percentage of the total Liberian population, perhaps on the order of 5 or 7 percent. Many of those departed earlier, and I do not know that any of us now has a clear sense of how many currently remain in Liberia.

The CHAIRMAN. And the division now is between those who like Taylor and those who do not like Taylor. Would that be oversimplifying it?

Secretary MOOSE. There are at least, I think, three or four identifiable factions which would have a claim to participation in a negotiation and, indeed, I think one of the concerns here is that we try to move the situation toward a solution before those factions become too crystallized, too rigid, and too deeply formed to avoid the perpetuation of a kind of division, one that might indeed tend to take on an ethnic connotation, an ethnic overlay.

The CHAIRMAN. Would you be kind enough to instruct your Liberian desk officer to be as sensitive as he can to the requests for help for immigration, and things of that sort? While we have a wonderful ambassador there who happens to be a Rhode Islander, we do get reports sometimes that they could be helped more.

Secretary MOOSE. I know that we have discussed these concerns before, Mr. Chairman, and I know that our desk officers as well as our consular officials who play a very key role in determining these issues have been sensitive, and I will try to see that your message gets across.

The CHAIRMAN. This is in no way a reflection on Ambassador Taddell, whom I have known and admired for a long time.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator SIMON. Thank you, and what State are you from, by the way, Mr. Chairman?

The CHAIRMAN. I am from the longest-named State, Rhode Island and Providence Plantation.

Senator SIMON. If I may get three questions in before I yield to my colleague, Senator Jeffords, in the Togo talks between the government and the opposition, do we have an observer, or have we asked for an observer?

Secretary MOOSE. Our Embassy in Ouagadougou is trying to monitor the discussions. They have not yet resumed. It is hoped that they will resume sometime later this week. I have no doubt that we will be able to have access to the information, because both the Government and the opposition parties have been anxious to keep us informed.

Senator SIMON. On Zaire, so that I am clear on this, is our position that Mobutu should leave?

Secretary MOOSE. Our position officially has not been that Mobutu should leave. We have supported the transition arrangements which were approved by the National Conference. That conference approved the high council of the republic. The high council approved a prime minister and the government that would administer the country for a transition period, and it approved President Mobutu's remaining in an, if you will, more or less titular position, but still as President of the republic.

Our concern and our problem has been, frankly, that Mobutu has tended to stray from the narrow limits imposed on his authority under those transition arrangements and interfere willfully in the administration of the government that was to have been carried out by the prime minister and his cabinet, but our position has not been that Mobutu must depart Zaire.

Senator SIMON. Let me just say—and I understand your position—that so long as he is present there are a great many people who have understandable fears, and I would be much more comfortable if our position were flatout that Mobutu should leave.

Then, finally, I notice that the group called "Africa, Faith, and Justice Network" has suggested that we recognize the government headed by Dr. Amos Sawyer as the legitimate government for Liberia. Any reactions?

Secretary MOOSE. Our policy has been, and I would strongly urge that we continue that policy, that we have not recognized a government in Liberia.

This does not mean that we do not deal with all of the elements there. We do, but I believe frankly until the process outlined in the Yamoussoukro Accords is allowed to go forward, there will not be in effect a legitimate government in Liberia. That is the position we have adopted.

Certainly I do not believe that that has in any way impeded our ability to work for a solution. Indeed, one could argue that contrary recognition might in fact impede our ability to do so.

Senator SIMON. Let me just add one word. I guess my concern—and we are hitting you, and we recognize that you do not make policy by yourself, but my concern is that, for example, after this massacre, that there really should be righteous indignation on our part, and a policy that reflects that indignation, that this is not just a violation of some trade agreement or something like that, we need more than a paper protest, that we have real responsibilities in Liberia, and that we need to be moving away from excessive caution as we shape policy.

Your friend and my friend Warren Christopher is a fine Secretary of State. He is also a very cautious man, and there are times when that is the right policy. There are other times when you have to stand up strongly, firmly, and say we are going to have to defend the people of this country. I think that point has arrived in Liberia. Senator Jeffords.

Senator JEFFORDS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am sorry I had to miss part of your testimony, Mr. Secretary. It has been a busy day, as we all know.

I have a few questions here. First, with respect to Liberia, I would like a little bit more information on what we are doing to try to have a peaceful transition to a pluralism or some form of democracy there. I would also like to know how we are working with friends on this issue, and how we are trying to get Eyadema to carry through with his promises.

Secretary MOOSE. Thank you, Senator Jeffords. The first question had to do with Liberia, as I recall.

Senator JEFFORDS. I am sorry, Togo.

Secretary MOOSE. To be fair and candid here, I think that the burden of leadership in terms of the diplomatic effort in Togo has been borne primarily by the French and the Germans. It was at their instigation that they convened a conference earlier in the year, I believe in February, in an effort to bring the parties together. That effort, alas, did not produce the desired result.

More recently, following the elections in France, the new French Government has taken it upon itself to play a fairly strong leadership role, which I think in the circumstances is extremely useful and important.

To be very honest, I think that in Togo there were certain elements who thought that the change of Government in France might create a more favorable situation for them, that they were perhaps, as a result of that, encouraged to persist in a course of action that from our perspective was misguided.

Therefore, I think the fact that the French Government recently did send a special delegation to Togo to meet directly with President Eyadema and to discourage him in the first instance from going forward with the elections that he had called for on June 20 and encouraged him to resume a dialog with the opposition parties, I think that was an extremely important signal, and I think the fact that there is now at least prospectively within the next couple of days a resumption of negotiations to be chaired by President Kampore in Ouagadougou is a very encouraging sign.

It certainly does not mean that problems are solved, because we have seen similar initiatives in the past which have not prospered, but I do think it is important that this initiative has taken place.

Our role I think persistently throughout the recent negotiations has been a very closely supportive one, certainly through our ambassador in Lome. He has worked very closely with his French counterparts and German counterparts and others in ways to try to support and encourage that kind of a process.

I think we have been extremely useful, if you will, in our ability to talk to members of the opposition to try to encourage on their behalf, on their part, more responsible behavior, because that has not always been the case, and to impress upon both sides the need

to try to reach an agreement on what this transition process should be. That remains our role.

I had a chance recently to meet with our Ambassador to Togo, who was here in Washington and who will be going back out soon. We talked in terms of how we can continue to be closely supportive of an initiative which largely I think has been, and rightly has been French and German.

Senator JEFFORDS. Thank you. I would like to share concerns on Zaire as to the chairman of the committee. I know you answered his question about our position on the status of Mobutu. I wondered what we are doing, though, on some other areas—for instance, in trying to protect the assets that Mobutu apparently had gathered, shall we say, and wondered if we are in the process of freezing them, or urging them to be frozen. What is being done with respect to that?

Secretary MOOSE. Without sort of telegraphing some of the things that we hope to be able to do in the near future, it is fair to say that we have talked about a number—we being the French, the Belgians and ourselves initially, but also beyond that, other members of the European Economic Community—have talked about a number of actions which we might take collectively to ensure that Zaire's assets are controlled by the legitimate, recognized authority. That authority is the government currently headed by Prime Minister Tshisekedi.

I think the objective is to make sure that these resources are being used to meet the true needs and requirements of the government and of the country. I think there are some things that can be done in that regard. I think we are moving as quickly as our various bureaucratic processes will allow us in that direction. I think it is important that they be collective efforts.

Frankly, as you look at what interests and assets and transactions exist here in the United States, they are relatively a small part of the totality, and therefore I think whatever we do in that regard should be, if at all possible, a collective action. That is the sense in which we have been working.

Senator JEFFORDS. Thank you. What actions are we taking or suggesting be taken by the United Nations to address the transitional crisis in Zaire, and also to work there to try and protect human rights in that aspect?

Secretary MOOSE. We have had a number of discussions with senior U.N. officials, including the Secretary-General. We know that he also is concerned, very concerned about the situation in Zaire. It was that concern that led him about 10 days ago to propose a special humanitarian mission to Zaire. That mission was announced.

Its principle purpose, as we understood it, really was to try to address the extremely disturbing situation now in Shaba Province, where over the last several months there have been a series of ethnic clashes or violence which appear to be carried out with the tolerance if not the instigation of the government, and which has resulted in something on the order of 100,000 people or more being displaced.

We think that is a legitimate interest on the part of the United Nations, and we supported very strongly the Secretary-General's proposal to send this mission to Shaba Province.

Beyond that, we believe that indeed, there may be a larger role for the United Nations to play, but clearly that is a role that could only be played if the parties are willing to allow that.

There is, I think, again in Zaire as there is in Togo a recognition that ultimately there has to be a democratic process. There has to be an election to determine the shape and the composition of a new government, and from our perspective it would be proper and right for the U.N., particularly its new elections unit, to play a role in assisting the parties to plan and organize such an election. So we certainly would encourage that, but it is not something that we can impose, or that the U.N. can impose on the situation.

Senator JEFFORDS. Thank you very much. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator SIMON. Thank you, and I apologize. The Secretary of Education was calling on a totally different matter, a matter that Senator Jeffords knows about.

Senator JEFFORDS. I would say that that is the reason I was late for this meeting.

Senator SIMON. We appreciate your being here, and we thank you very, very much. I will be in touch with you on some followup on this.

Secretary MOOSE. I would be happy to get back to you.

Senator SIMON. Thank you very much.

Secretary MOOSE. Thank you.

Senator SIMON. Our next witnesses are Steve Askin, who is a freelance journalist, who is coauthoring a book on the Zairean situation. He is a former African correspondent for the National Catholic Reporter, and a former aide to our late House colleague, Representative Harold Washington, mayor of the City of Chicago.

Janet Fleischman is a specialist on human rights in Africa and has recently returned from a trip to Liberia. Sister Stephanie Mertens is from the Order of the Adorers of the Blood of Christ Convent in Ruma, IL. She is being accompanied by Sister Mildred Gross, who is the head of that order—they are the ones who have recently suffered tragic losses—and Dr. Kennedy Graham has just returned from Geneva, where he, in behalf of the Parliamentarians for Global Action, has been active in the Togo situation.

I would ask the four of you to please come to the witness table.

Unless you have any preferences, I will just start on the left-hand side with Dr. Graham. I will start with you, and we will observe a 5-minute rule. We will enter your full statements in the record so we can devote some time to questions.

STATEMENT OF DR. KENNEDY GRAHAM, PARLIAMENTARIANS FOR GLOBAL ACTION, NEW YORK, NY

Dr. GRAHAM. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for the opportunity to testify before your subcommittee. Our organization, Parliamentarians for Global Action, has become involved in supporting the democratization process in Togo for the better part of a 1½ years now, in response to an appeal by some of our members in the Togo transitional legislature.

We have in fact held a work shop in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire, in 1991 on democracy and economic recovery in Africa. We will be holding another one in Namibia shortly. We sent in two parliamentary delegations during crises in December 1991 and in June 1992 to Lome. We have been involved in discussions with many ministers of the Togo Government as they come through New York, and indeed our parliamentarians as well, and with the OAU through Dr. Salim Salim.

We have more recently been asked to observe the elections in Togo, which for the moment we have chosen to decline for reasons that I will explain.

Our statement, as you have said, will be entered into the written record, or at least be made available to members of your subcommittee, so I will not go into detail. I think Secretary Moose described it very well, and accurately.

After an initial, I think optimistic period of a move toward democratization in 1991, the situation has deteriorated significantly during the second part of 1992 and the first half of 1993 to the stage where it is at a crisis level now.

I think the message my organization would wish to leave before you and your colleagues is that it is essential to take the matter of democratization in Togo with the utmost seriousness. It is a small country—a very small country—with a small population of 3 million, but it stands symbolically as a test case for the democratization movement in Africa.

It is essential that the international community, and particularly the United States, does not turn its back but becomes constructively engaged in supporting the process to democracy, and that I think, if I could pick up on your own comments, I think with respect to Liberia there is a need for an active policy to be developed in that respect.

I would simply like to put before you what we would consider in our organization to be four conditions of democratization in Togo, and to suggest that there are comparably four points of policy that you might wish to consider for U.S. policy and, indeed, for the international community.

The four conditions for democratization for Togo would be, (1) that the army declare itself to have complete neutrality and complete noninvolvement in the political process, while swearing, of course, continuing loyalty to the commander-in-chief. That condition does not obtain, and has not for a great deal of time—in fact, one could say, for decades.

(2), A deferral of the elections until several conditions are met: first, civil order is restored to the country, second the refugee situation is abated some 400,000 refugees internally and externally, and third, the U.N. electoral experts who have been involved in Togo are satisfied that the process, the electoral process, can proceed again, and the elections should be deferred until those three conditions are met. So that is the second condition.

The third condition would be that the United Nations should consider sending in a peacekeeping force, obviously on request, to help restore civil order, and that U.N. electoral assistance should continue, and fourthly, that in order to ensure the political impartiality of the electoral process, and bearing in mind the transitional

nature of the regime as it is meant to be, that the international community—at least a condition, a fourth condition of democratization should be that neither the current president nor the current prime minister should put forward their candidacies in the presidential elections, a point which was originally decreed by the high council, the transitional parliament in 1991.

Those would be the four conditions for democratization that I would put forward for your consideration, and the three comparable policies for the international community in the United States in support of Togo democratization:

No. 1, nonrecognition of the current electoral plans which have gone, as you know, a great deal down the road;

No. 2, the indication that economic sanctions would be applied if the electoral process is not deferred and reformed;

No. 3, support for a U.N. peacekeeping force or an OAU force under Security Council supervision—I think preferably not ECOWAS but possibly a regional force and, of course, U.N. electoral assistance to Togo; and

No. 4, the support by the international community and the United States for the point of policy, as I mentioned, by the HCR, the transitional legislature, that neither the president nor the prime minister should put themselves forward as candidates.

I was interested to hear the exchange between you and the ambassador with regard to Zaire and President Mobutu in that respect. I think there are nuances that we could go into, but I think basically it would be sufficient to simply announce support for that.

Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Dr. Graham follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DR. KENNEDY GRAHAM, SECRETARY GENERAL
PARLIAMENTARIANS FOR GLOBAL ACTION

Honorable Senators, I thank you for giving me the opportunity to testify before such a knowledgeable and distinguished committee on the political future of Togo and the role of international parties therein.

I address you as the Secretary General of Parliamentarians for Global Action—a network of over 900 legislators from around the world, representing some 70 countries on the six continents, including, Togo and the United States. Our parliamentary members are committed to solving global problems in a spirit of cooperation that transcends national and ideological boundaries.

Global Action has been working intensively to sustain democracy in Togo since the political crisis in October 1991 when we were approached by a member of the interim parliament for assistance. Since then Global Action has sent in parliamentary delegations to mediate and assist in resolving Togo's ongoing political crises. Our involvement with the Togolese parliamentarians in their democratic struggle has remained strong. We are consulting regularly with both opposition members and government representatives in New York and in Europe on the current political impasse.

As you know, the effort toward democracy in Togo has recently been seriously set back and is in dire need of assistance. Since the army action in 1991, the President has gradually but effectively reasserted increasing political control over Togo. We believe that the present situation in Togo is extremely volatile, and may be on the verge of civil war. Press reports of army units attacking unarmed citizenry are well documented. Thousands of Togolese have fled either into their tribal villages or into neighboring Benin and Ghana where they have tribal ties. Over 400,000 Togolese are refugees in neighboring countries. Parliamentarians, the media, human rights activists have been intimidated. According to informed observers Togo is under a military occupation by its own President and his troops.¹

¹United Nations Dept. of Public Information Press Release, WFP/887, May 13, 1993.

Togo has an army of over 12,000 well armed troops for a population of 3.7 million. At 3.3 percent of GNP, military expenditure is well-above neighboring Benin (2.1 percent) and Ghana (0.9 percent).² The army is loyal to the President for both monetary and social reasons. President Eyadema has kept his troops well paid. While there are reports that Togo and possibly President Eyadema's government are being hurt by the withdrawal of international aid and the general strike ordered by the opposition, opposition sources asserts that the President has vast sums of money in foreign accounts that has been removed from the domestic treasury, and his revenue, albeit sparse, for state operations is being funneled directly to the troops. Furthermore, the army is fiercely loyal to the President due to their tribal affiliation; over 70 percent of the troops are from his Kabye tribe from the poorer Northern sector of the country. Opposition sources allege that he has conducted numerous purges in the army to increase the concentration of his tribesmen even further, particularly at higher levels. In essence, to his military followers the long term benefits of keeping the President in power include financial security and social stability.

In April 1991, after domestic and international appeals, Togo began to move to democracy. A National Conference formed an interim parliament, a new constitution exists and was adopted through a free and fair referendum in 1992. However, despite this progress an impasse developed over the RPT's (Eyadema's party) increasing domination of the interim cabinet. The political crisis can be summarized as follows:

While constitutional and legal frameworks exist, they have all been nullified, through presidential decree, or subjected to the President's administration.

The initial constitutional electoral commission has been revoked by the President. A new commission now exists, but, its officers and personnel are those appointed by, and hence are very favorable to, the President.³

The new commission revoked the electoral census created with the aid of the United Nations, which both the opposition and Interim Parliament agreed to, and which was used for the constitutional referendum.⁴

In a reversal of prior agreements Eyadema has scheduled the crucial presidential elections before the legislative elections. He has registered as a candidate for the presidential elections.

It should be noted that in the initial census 1.4 million voters were registered, in a country whose population is some 3.7 million. Togo's new voters registry lists over 2 million voters. In a country with a total population estimated at 3.7 million of whom half are under 15-years-old are suspiciously high figures.⁵ Opposition reports indicate that none of them, nor their associates has received voting cards as of yet. It is suspected that the President is selectively distributing the electoral cards, and that he is distributing more cards than there are voters.

The Constitutional Court and National Commission for Human Rights which the constitution provides for in order to ensure legitimate government and guarantee human rights have both been appropriated by the President; his people comprise the personnel.⁶

While the opposition has decided to boycott the fore-coming elections, "opposition" candidates are supposedly standing for office. Our information is that the President is staging an election and selecting candidates to make the election look as if it were real. Opposition sources allege that one individual was offered \$1.2 million, by the President, simply to stand as a presidential candidate against him.

For their part advisors to the President who have met with us in New York contend that the opposition forces in Togo are unduly influenced by "extremist elements" in the parliament who are intent only on fomenting instability. As they see it, political stability as they would define it is the paramount need of the country and should have priority above all else, including if necessary, certain freedoms which are being abused by these "extremist elements" against national interest. The President's group believes that it has negotiated patiently and in good faith with these "extremists" leading up to the election. But their obstinacy has made compromise and a conciliation, in the national interest, impossible. They also accuse "extremists" of human rights abuse themselves. Thus the situation is polarized, both politically, and in a sense, militarily.

² PGA Background report on Togo, p. 4.

³ EIU 1992, Vol. 4, p. 14.

⁴ Ibid, p. 14.

⁵ Ibid, p. 14. and EIU 1991, p. 5.

⁶ EIU 1993, Vol. 1, p. 10.

Both the opposition and many members of the international community have asserted that any elections under these conditions cannot be fair, and should not be legitimized. The opposition has therefore decided to boycott the elections. They have instructed citizens not to stand as candidates, and not to vote. They have also requested that international bodies refuse requests to observe the election, for fear that the presence of observers may legitimize the process.

The governments of Canada, France, Germany, and the United States, plus the United Nations Secretary-General's office, have refused to observe an upcoming election under these conditions. Our organization has similarly issued a statement to this effect, and our Executive Committee refused a request by the President to observe the election.

The French Government is still conducting talks with both the opposition and the President with the aim of arranging a round-table on mutually agreed conditions for elections and a return to democracy. In response to a high-level French military delegation's visit to Lome President Eyadema has postponed the presidential elections from June 20 for an additional two weeks.⁷

The efforts of the international community, including the United States, should be divided into short term policy, and long term efforts.

SHORT TERM POLICY

In the immediate future, the international community must remain on its course of refusing to recognize the outcome of the forthcoming election, and condemning any election under similar conditions, dominated by the current President.

While the 400,000 refugees outside of Togo's borders are receiving humanitarian aid from various organizations, hundreds of thousands inside the country are without basic provision and are, to my understanding, suffering badly. All efforts should be made to provide humanitarian assistance to these people. International aid to the Togo Government should not be restored. Food and medical supplies to its people, however, need to be continued through nongovernmental organizations.

If a compromise is reached that provides for a free and fair election, the international community should engage in electoral assistance. Global Action believes that such assistance should be beyond a simply observance of the voting process. It should include the process of an electoral census, voter registration, observance of the campaign period, including the right of free speech, freedom of movement throughout the territory, the right to vote freely without intimidation and finally a fair tallying process of the vote.

International observers to monitor the army's confinement to barracks is one of the opposition's crucial demands. France and Germany had offered to send such observers but so far this request was refused by the President. If there is to be a genuine election monitoring the army's compliance in this regard will be essential.

LONG TERM POLICY

A strong international efforts in support of Togolese democracy is a profound importance today. The Togo experience will set a precedent for all other democratic movements of peoples in Africa, and indeed around the world. It will, in essence, contribute to the world's attitude toward democracy and the importance of self-determination in the 1990's.

On a more immediate basis it will ease the regional tensions that have built up between Togo and its neighboring countries of Ghana and Benin, both recipients of vast numbers of Togolese refugees with indigenous populations that have close tribal ties to Togo. Ghana's President has specifically requested ECOWAS to intervene with peacekeeping troops in Togo's internal strife. President Rawlings, himself of the Ewe tribe as are many members of Togo's opposition, has also offered to put 10,000 to 15,000 Ghanaian troops under U.N. or ECOWAS command for restoring order in Togo.⁸

Honorable Senators, when the President attempted to undermine the existence of the elected officials earlier this year, the opposition finally called for an indefinite general strike and a civil disobedience campaign. They laid four demands for the President:

1. A declaration of political neutrality by the Togolese army;
2. The deployment of a civilian force to ensure the security of the civilian population;
3. The punishment of soldiers who attacked the interim parliament; and

⁷ Press Reports/Togo Mission.

⁸ EIU 1993, p. 15.

4. The establishment of a new transitional government that is not dominated by the President's people and which would speedily organize free and fair election.

I recommend first, that the international community declare its support of these demands, not with a view to supporting the opposition per se, but rather to give the country of Togo the chance to recover its momentum toward democracy after the setbacks of recent months. The international community should, therefore, also affirm its refusal to legitimize, associate, or recognize any Togolese administrator whose authority is gained under a body not fulfilling these demands.

In terms of a constructive engagement to ensure a return to democratization, the United States and the international community could consider a range of optional strategies, namely:

- Observing the election, if and when it is held, and being prepared to criticize it and deny its authenticity, as the observing team's judgment might determine;
- Freezing of personal assets of President Eyadema and his family (as in the case of the Philippines);
- Diplomatic and economic sanctions (as in Haiti).
- United Nations civilian and peacekeeping presence before, during and after elections (as in Cambodia); and
- Strengthening informal ties to individuals and groups within the government and the High Council of the Republic, who are in favor of the democratization movement and the deferral of the elections.

Senator SIMON. We thank you.

Next is Sister Stephanie Mertens. We are very pleased to have you here.

STATEMENT OF SISTER STEPHANIE MERTENS, ASC, THE ORDER OF THE ADORERS OF THE BLOOD OF CHRIST

Sister MERTENS. Thank you, Senator Simon. It is good to be here.

Senator SIMON. Could you pull the microphone a little closer to you?

Sister MERTENS. I am pleased to have the opportunity to speak concerning the situation in Liberia.

As you know, the Adorers of the Blood of Christ, in honor of the memory of our five sisters who were murdered in the civil war in Liberia in October 1992, we have dedicated ourselves to work for peace in Liberia, and in this massive effort we have linked with friends from around the world, as well as with the initiatives of our U.S. Government officials. Our work has included prayer, education, information-sharing, and advocacy.

The five Adorers were dedicated to the healing and reconciliation of the victims of the civil war at the time that they lost their lives. We are inspired by the words of Archbishop Michael Francis, who is the Archbishop of the Catholic Diocese of Monrovia, as he indicates to his people the steps they must take if they are to follow the road that will lead to peace, and he says, "Our first priority is reconciliation. We all need to forgive and be forgiven."

It really strikes me, when I hear him saying this, because he knows his people and he knows what he desires for his people and he says, "Let us consciously and deliberately reach across tribal lines and extend friendship and hospitality to those we are expected to hate. Let us cherish the memory of all the innocent victims, whether from our side or the other side. We must never forget them, nor the ordeals to which they were subjected, but let us focus on the obliteration of the hatred that brought about their untimely deaths."

So today in our testimony here, we desire to call for a policy toward Liberia which will enable the healing of the deep wounds of the terrible civil war, and bring new life in Liberia. We are encouraged because the design of key components and programs for the needed policy are available.

The following points were received in conversation with Archbishop Michael Francis as recently as June 2, 1993, when he spoke with Sister Mildred Gross, our provincial leader, who is here with me today. We concur with these policy priorities that he recommended.

The bishop asked that the U.S. Government set up a committee to investigate the deaths of the five sisters. He stated that in Liberia there are witnesses and information available.

The bishop urged the United States to recognize the interim government as the legitimate governing authority in Liberia until free and fair elections can be held in accordance with the Yamoussoukro. This action he believes will influence Charles Taylor and the NPFL to cooperate in the resolution of the conflict, and that is his opinion.

The bishop also says that we need increased United States assistance to ECOMOG immediately, and it is gravely needed. The forces of ECOMOG and ECOWAS are in very constrained situations, so that what help we can give is critical.

Then the bishop asked for assistance to rehabilitate the country.

So following from that, we, the Adorers of the Blood of Christ, would like in this testimony to call upon the United States to do the following: support strongly diplomatic efforts in collaboration with the United Nations, the OAU, and the ECOWAS group, this always, though, with the careful avoidance of a military solution, and with the efforts to maintain an international arms embargo.

We also call for our country to press allies in Europe and in Africa to give diplomatic backing to the ECOWAS peace plan and to stop their corporations from doing business with any of the warring factions.

We wish to urge the establishment of a unified government integrated with Liberia's national fabric based on respect for human rights, democratic principles, and economic responsibility.

We see a need for support for programs of conflict resolution and reconciliation of the profound ethnic polarization. We would also like to call for the empowerment of indigenous leadership in economic, health, education, and agriculture.

We see also as critical the debt cancellation or debt relief programs that possibly are available in various forms. Somehow, that has to be applied. We also see a need to freeze bank accounts of Liberian officials who continue the conflict and divert U.S. aid funds to private savings in Western banks, a grave abuse.

There are more points, Mr. Senator, in the testimony, which I would please to have entered in the record. And I would just like to say that at this time we feel certain that it is time for a new United States policy toward Liberia, and the time is right. It is possible more now than ever before in the history of this country, which was established with the motto, "the love of liberty brought us here." Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Sister Mertens follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SISTER STEPHANIE MERTENS, ASC

The Adorers of the Blood of Christ, in honor of the memory of our five sisters who were murdered in the civil war in Liberia in October 1992, have dedicated ourselves to work for peace in Liberia. In this massive effort we have linked with friends from around the world, as well as with the initiatives of our U.S. Government officials. Our work has included prayer, education, information sharing, and advocacy.

The five Adorers were dedicated to the healing and reconciliation of the victims of the civil war at the time they lost their lives. We are inspired by the words of Archbishop Michael Francis, the Catholic Archbishop of Monrovia, as he indicates to his people the steps his people must take if they are to follow the road that will lead to peace:

"Our first priority is reconciliation * * * We all need to forgive and be forgiven * * * Let us consciously and deliberately reach across tribal lines and extend friendship and hospitality to those we are "expected" to hate. Let us cherish the memory of all the innocent victims, whether from "our side" or the "other side." We must never forget them, nor the ordeals to which they were subjected. But let us focus on the obliteration of the hatred that brought about their untimely deaths."

In this testimony we wish to call for United States policy toward Liberia which will enable the healing of the deep wounds of the terrible civil war and bring new life in Liberia. We are encouraged because the design of key components and programs for the needed policy have been prepared.

The following points received from Archbishop Michael Francis speaking from Monrovia on June 2, 1993 with Sister Mildred Gross, ASC, our provincial leader, who is here with me today, and in which we concur, are worthy of high priority:

- The Bishop asked that the U.S. government set up a committee to investigate the deaths of the five sisters. He stated that in Liberia there are witnesses and information available;
- The Bishop urged the United States to recognize the Interim Government as the legitimate governing authority in Liberia until free and fair elections are held in accordance with the Economic Community of West African States peace plan, entitled Yamoussoukro IV. This action will influence Charles Taylor and the National Patriotic Liberation Front to cooperate in the resolution of the conflict;
- The Bishop said increased United States assistance to ECOMOG, the regional peacekeeping force sent to Liberia in August 1990 to enforce the peace accord, is immediately and gravely needed; and
- The Bishop asked for assistance to rehabilitate the country.

We call upon the United States to:

- Support diplomatic efforts in collaboration with the United Nations, the Organization for African Unity, and the Economic Community of West African States, to achieve peace in Liberia, with careful avoidance of military solutions, along with maintenance of an international arms embargo;
- Press allies in Europe and Africa to give diplomatic backing to the ECOWAS Peace Plan and stop their corporations from doing business with any of the warring factions;
- Work for establishment of a unified government, integrative of Liberia's national fabric, based on respect for human rights, democratic principles, and economic accountability;
- Support programs of conflict resolution and reconciliation of profound ethnic polarization, along with empowerment and development of indigenous leadership in economics, health, education, agriculture;
- Participate in programs of debt cancellation, and relief of repayment pressures, i.e. "Enhanced Toronto Terms", also the "Trinidad Terms", contingent on free and fair elections, and Liberian commitment to peace, democratization and human rights;
- Strongly support along with the UN, the election process with financial and technical assistance;
- Freeze bank accounts of Liberian officials who continue the conflict and divert US government aid funds to private savings in western banks;
- Continue Temporary Protected Status and other avenues of extended stay for refugees until peace is restored;
- Support the return home of the millions of displaced Liberians through well funded repatriation programs;
- Give Liberia favorable trade status;
- Support Liberia food and agricultural self-sufficiency;

- Call for observance of International Law in Liberia, particularly as this pertains to access to food, medicine, and the rights of women and children;
- Support environmental and ecological protection of the West Africa region;
- Support development of locally controlled reconstruction and rehabilitation in Liberia;
- Support strong, well funded education programs at all levels as the best hope for Liberia's future;
- Support collaborative development of critically needed health programs with a view of enabling indigenous skills; and
- Be on the alert to diplomatically and financially isolate any individuals or states that prevent full return to Liberian democracy, and national integrity and sovereignty.

It is appropriate that the United States make a long term commitment to reconstruction in Liberia. America has in fact been a central player in Liberia since the early 1800's. The United States has profited largely from its relationship with Liberia having strategic access to communication, land, air and other key resources in Liberia.

It is important to understand that the war in Liberia is not a purely tribal affair. There are deep historical roots of the conflict arising in part from the original exclusionary rule of the Americo-Liberians, with exploitation of the indigenous who suffered poverty and neglect. There was a systemic inequality that developed with oppression of the poor by the rich.

It is time for new United States policy on Liberia * * * policy which clearly rejects and reverses previous damaging policy of either neglect or manipulative interference, and helps to bring about a new day. The people of Liberia are a people of courage who long for peace. We hope that this time of deep crisis in Liberia may open the way for a time of new opportunity for the country which has as its motto: the love of liberty brought us here!

Senator SIMON. Thank you very much. Next is Ms. Janet Fleischman of Africa Watch.

STATEMENT OF JANET FLEISCHMAN, AFRICA WATCH

Ms. FLEISCHMAN. Thank you, Chairman Simon, for holding these important hearings and for inviting me to testify. My name is Janet Fleischman and I am a research associate for Africa Watch, which is a division of Human Rights Watch. Human Rights Watch is a human rights monitoring organization with five regional watch committees. My written testimony has been submitted for the record of this hearing.

This is a critical time in Liberia, with the country plunged back into war and with all sides of the conflict responsible for human rights abuses. Given the special relationship that has always existed between the U.S. and Liberia, the U.S. has an important role to play to help end the bloody war and its attendant human rights abuses.

Liberia is a devastated country. The civil war that began in December 1989 has killed some 40,000 people, has turned one-third of the population into refugees while displacing tens of thousands of others from their homes, and has destroyed the country's economic infrastructure.

The news reports of this weekend's massacre of at least 300 unarmed civilians in Harbel vividly illustrates the ongoing tragedy and underscores the critical need for human rights protections in Liberia. Initial reports appear to indicate that Charles Taylor's National Patriotic Front of Liberia, the NPFL, was responsible for the massacre, although Africa Watch and other independent observers have not yet been able to conduct an investigation.

This massacre demonstrates anew that the only solution to the Liberian crisis will have to be political, based on respect for human

rights. This crisis cannot be solved militarily. The peace process must be linked to the cessation of human rights abuses.

At the height of the war in August 1990, in the absence of any prospect for intervention by the U.S. or the U.N., a group of West African nations under the auspices of the Economic Community of West African States, ECOWAS, though dominated by Nigeria, took the unprecedented and laudable step of sending a peacekeeping force into Monrovia. This force was known as ECOMOG. Unfortunately, with NPFL attacks continuing, there was no peace to keep.

ECOMOG has now spent almost 3 years in Liberia, yet its goal of bringing peace to the country remains elusive. Pursuing peace without recognizing the centrality of human rights has left ECOMOG embroiled in a conflict with few immediate prospects for resolution.

In the interest of ending the war and defeating a seemingly intractable adversary in Charles Taylor's NPFL, ECOMOG has allied itself with other warring factions, the AFL, the Armed Forces of Liberia, and ULIMO, the United Liberation Movement for Democracy in Liberia. These human rights records of these two groups range from suspect to abysmal. This undermines ECOMOG's credibility and, therefore, its ability to bring peace.

At the United Nations, after the Security Council finally imposed an arms embargo last November, the Secretary General dispatched a special representative, Trevor Gordon-Somers to investigate the situation. The resulting report that was released in mid-March suggested that there might be a role for U.N. observers to monitor a new cease-fire agreement, but foresaw no human rights monitoring component to their mandate, thus missing yet another occasion to insert human rights protections into the peace negotiations. The mandate of the proposed U.N. cease-fire monitors must be expanded to include human rights monitoring and documentation.

Given the Clinton administration's latest request for \$12 million for ECOWAS' peacekeeping activities, the U.S. is likely to have some leverage over ECOMOG's behavior. It is critical for the administration to make clear its concern about human rights violations by all sides, including by ECOMOG and the forces with which ECOMOG is allied, and to use its aid as leverage for human rights concerns.

The draft U.S. human rights action plan prepared for the current Vienna Conference on Human Rights calls for human rights to be, and I quote, an integrated element of all U.N. peacekeeping, humanitarian, conflict resolution, elections monitoring, development programs, and other activities. The plan also states that human rights work should be included in all U.N. peacekeeping operations, as has been done in El Salvador and Cambodia. The U.S. should apply to Liberia the approach set forth in the plan prepared for the Vienna conference.

The international community must provide practical assistance to Liberia such as the deployment of human rights monitors. These monitors must be even-handed in their approach and document human rights violations by all the warring factions. This is one way to help protect Liberian civilians and to prevent future massacres.

Africa Watch looks forward to working with the Africa Subcommittee in bringing greater attention to human rights conditions in Liberia, here in the U.S., and internationally.

Thank you for this opportunity, and I would be happy to answer any questions.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Fleischman follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JANET FLEISCHMAN OF AFRICA WATCH

Thank you, Chairman Simon, for holding these important hearings and for inviting me to testify. My name is Janet Fleischman, and I am a research associate for Africa Watch, a division of Human Rights Watch. Human Rights Watch is a non-governmental human rights monitoring organization with five, regional divisions, Asia Watch Africa Watch, Helsinki Watch, Middle East Watch and Americas Watch.

I am particularly glad to have this opportunity to discuss the human rights situation in Liberia and ways the U.S. can help to promote and protect human rights. This is a critical time in Liberia, with the country plunged back into war and all sides to the conflict responsible for human rights abuses. Given the "special relationship" that has always existed between the U.S. and Liberia, the U.S. Government has an important role to play in helping to end the bloody war and its attendant human rights abuses.

The news emerging about this weekend's massacre of some 200 to 300 unarmed civilians in Harbel, apparently committed by Charles Taylor's NPFL, vividly illustrates the ongoing tragedy in Liberia. It also underscores the critical need for human rights protections, an area in which the international community can provide assistance. This massacre demonstrates anew that the only solution to the Liberian crisis will have to be political, based on respect for human rights; the crisis cannot be solved militarily. Similarly, human rights cannot continue to be separated from the peace process, as has been done since the beginning of the conflict.

Liberia is a devastated country. The civil war that began in December 1989 has killed 20,000 to 40,000 people, turned one-third of the population into refugees while displacing tens of thousands of others from the homes within Liberia, and destroyed the economic infrastructure of the country.

Since November 1990, Liberia has been a divided country: the Interim Government of National Unity (IGNU) governs Monrovia, backed by the West African peacekeeping force (ECOMOG), while Charles Taylor's National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) controls much of the rest of the country. The United Liberation Movement for Democracy in Liberia (ULIMO), a rebel group made up primarily of soldiers from former President Samuel Doe's army, launched incursions against the NPFL from neighboring Sierra Leone, and since August 1992 it has controlled two western counties. However, the situation changed dramatically on October 15, when the NPFL attacked Monrovia, ending 2 years of an uneasy peace and reigniting the civil war.

Background to the Conflict.—The roots of Liberia's civil war go far back in Liberian history. However, the immediate precursor dates from 1985: after former President Samuel Doe, an ethnic Krahn, stole the presidential elections, he brutally suppressed a coup attempt led by Thomas Qwiwonkpa, an ethnic Gio. Doe's soldiers, the Krahn-dominated Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL), engaged in bloody reprisals against real and suspected opponents, targeting mostly Gios and Manos; hundreds were killed and hundreds more were detained without charge or trial. This violence and the subsequent repression of independent activity and political opposition set the stage for the country's ethnic conflict and civil war.

On December 24, 1989, Charles Taylor and his NPFL launched an incursion from the Ivory Coast into Nimba County. The AFL responded with a ruthless counterinsurgency campaign, indiscriminately killing civilians, burning villages, raping women and looting. The brutality served to swell the ranks of NPFL recruits, many of whom were Gio and Mano boys orphaned by the fighting or enraged by the AFL's conduct. The NPFL, for its part, targeted suspected supporters of the Doe regime, particularly members of the Krahn and Mandingo ethnic groups, slaughtering civilians and destroying villages along the way. By the summer of 1990, when the war spread to Monrovia, the level of atrocities committed by all sides reached astounding proportions.

In August 1990, without any prospect for intervention by the U.S. or the U.N., a group of West African nations under the auspices of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) though dominated by Nigeria took the unprecedented step of sending a peacekeeping force into Monrovia. This force, known as the

Economic Community Cease-Fire Monitoring Group, (ECOMOG),¹ had a mandate to impose a cease-fire, help form an interim government and hold elections. Unfortunately, with NPFL attacks continuing, there was no peace to keep, and ECOMOG was thrust into combat to push the NPFL out of Monrovia. ECOMOG has now spent almost three years in Liberia, yet its goal of bringing peace to the country remains elusive.

There has been much speculation about the ulterior motives of the participating states for intervening in Liberia.² Regardless of its motivations, ECOMOG accomplished certain concrete objectives: it established a semblance of order and peace in the battered city which allowed international humanitarian groups to return to Liberia; it confined to their barracks the AFL and another rebel group, the Independent National Patriotic Front of Liberia (INPFL), led by Prince Johnson;³ it enabled the Interim Government, headed by Amos Sawyer, to be installed; and it obtained a cease-fire.

For two years—from November 1990, when the cease-fire was signed in Bamako, until October 1992—an uneasy truce reigned in Liberia, with the West African troops guarding Monrovia and the NPFL controlling the rest of the country. During this new period, ECOMOG's role was confined to that of a police force; it was unable to bridge the political division of the country and lacked the mandate to confront Taylor militarily.

Although the widespread killing and brutality associated with the war largely subsided after the cease-fire, the civilian population continued to face a range of human rights abuses, from extrajudicial executions and torture to tight restrictions on freedom of movement and intolerance of dissent. These violations were particularly evident in the ninety percent of the country controlled by the NPFL, but civilians were also victimized by Prince Johnson's INPFL and by the AFL. Underlying these problems was the perception among NPFL "fighters" that they were a law unto themselves. Many of them were young, undisciplined and unpaid, and had considerable latitude to arrest, detain, extort, threaten and sometimes injure civilians.

The picture was further complicated by the rise of another armed faction, ULIMO, formed in 1991 by former AFL soldiers who had fled to Sierra Leone. ULIMO's political agenda is unclear, despite its claim to seek peace and democracy for the country. Skirmishes between ULIMO and the NPFL occurred sporadically since late 1991, especially near the Sierra Leone border. The NPFL used the threat of ULIMO infiltration as a means of controlling the population in its territory; civilians were arbitrarily denounced for spying for ULIMO, and faced a range of penalties, from harassment and detention to extrajudicial execution.

Efforts at Peace.—Efforts to implement peace agreements continued throughout 1992. The basis of the peace process is the Yamoussoukro IV accord, the October 1991 ECOWAS-sponsored peace agreement. It should be noted that ULIMO was not a party to the Yamoussoukro agreement, a fact that was later used by Taylor to justify his noncompliance. In April 1992, a mini-summit of West African states, including Charles Taylor, was held in Geneva. The participants re-affirmed their commitment to the Yamoussoukro IV accords, and established a new timetable for ECOMOG deployment in NPFL territory. The most important feature of the Geneva meeting was that ECOMOG would secure a buffer zone on the Liberian-Sierra Leone border, to separate ULIMO and NPFL forces. However, just after signing the accord, Taylor announced that he had been forced to sign and indicated that he was not prepared to disarm or encamp his fighters.

On April 30, ECOMOG began its long-awaited deployment in NPFL territory, with the aim of disarming all factions and establishing an atmosphere in which free and fair elections could be held. In late May, however, six Senegalese soldiers were captured during a gun battle with the NPFL in Lofa County and executed, report-

¹ ECOMOG included forces from five countries of EGOWAS: Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Nigeria and Sierra Leone, later joined by Mali. In September 1991, as part of the ongoing peace process and efforts to appease Taylor, Senegalese troops also joined. The Senegalese withdrew in January 1993.

² Some have accused Nigeria of attempting to support the Doe government, since Doe and Nigeria's President Babangida were allies; others contend that Nigeria was striving to act like the regional superpower that it aspires to be. Others believe that the motivation was a genuine fear of regional destabilization, since dissidents from the Gambia, Ghana and Sierra Leone, most of whom were trained together with the NPFL in Libya, were known to be working with the NPFL. Still others contend that the intervention was due to the NPFL's treatment of the West African nationals living in Liberia; thousand of Nigerians, Guineans and Ghanaians were effectively held hostage in Monrovia, and hundreds were later killed. Another theory is that the enormous flow of refugees into the neighboring countries compelled them to act.

³ The INPFL was effectively dissolved in late 1992 after fighting broke out between it and the NPFL at Caldwell. Prince Johnson is currently living in Nigeria.

edly by having their throats slit. As a result, all ECOMOG troops were withdrawn from Lofa Country to Monrovia.

The fragile cease-fire was finally broken in August, when ULIMO launched an attack from Sierra Leone against the NPFL. The NPFL forces were routed and at least 30,000 displaced persons streamed into Monrovia. Civilians reportedly were targeted by both sides during the fighting, with fighters looting in villages, stealing from fleeing refugees, and executing those suspected of sympathizing with the opposing faction. Taylor accused ECOMOG of supporting ULIMO.

The ULIMO offensive forced ECOMOG to announce the withdrawal of all its forces to Monrovia. However, Taylor prohibited the departure of 580 ECOMOG soldiers stationed in NPFL territory. Until early September, the soldiers were effectively being held hostage; they were disarmed, prevented from leaving their sites and prohibited from receiving supplies or communications from Monrovia. They were finally allowed to return to Monrovia in late September, due to the intervention of former U.S. President Jimmy Carter. However, during their return to Monrovia, many of the soldiers were humiliated, beaten, and had their weapons, vehicles and personal belongings confiscated by the NPFL. This incident served to increase ECOMOG's hostility toward the NPFL, and set the tone for its transformation into a "peace-enforcing" unit.

The Renewed War.—The situation exploded on October 15, when Taylor launched "Operation Octopus," attacking ECOMOG positions around Monrovia, and even striking at the AFL, which was encamped at its Schiefflin barracks on the outskirts of the city. For almost a month, ECOMOG struggled to repel what has been called "the siege of Monrovia." Fighting raged in and around the city, with the suburban areas of Gardnersville, Barnersville, New Georgia and Caldwell particularly hard hit. Approximately 200,000 people displaced from these areas flooded into the central city to escape the fighting. Other civilians were pushed behind Taylor lines into the country's interior, joining thousands of displaced persons there. Those who refused to cooperate were often executed by the NPFL.

It is difficult to estimate the number of people killed during the renewed fighting. In early November, the World Health Organization estimated that up to 3,000 civilians and combatants had died since October 15. In late October, five American nuns, based in Gardnersville, were killed by the NPFL. Although the nuns represented a tiny fraction of those killed, their death attracted international attention to the resurging war.

The ECOMOG Response.—The urgency of the situation compelled ECOMOG to adopt a new strategy: it accepted the assistance of other Liberian factions in fighting the NPFL. The human rights record of these factions—ULIMO and the AFL—ranged from suspect to abysmal. The AFL was thoroughly discredited by its horrible abuses during the 1980s and especially during the war in 1990, when it massacred civilians and devastated Monrovia. ULIMO is an offshoot of the AFL, and its conduct in the areas it captured in 1992 reportedly included attacks on civilians, looting, and executions of suspected NPFL sympathizers. The formal connections between the AFL and ULIMO are unclear, although most of ULIMO's key commanders are former AFL leaders, and hundreds of AFL soldiers apparently left their barracks to join ULIMO.

The relationship between ECOMOG and these groups seems to be built upon the classic view that "the enemy of my enemy is my friend." After first supporting the right of the AFL to defend itself from attack, ECOMOG soon permitted the AFL to operate alongside the multinational troops, although the AFL retained a separate command structure and controls certain areas on its own. ECOMOG claims that ULIMO operates independently, but it is clear that some coordination exists. There is little indication that ECOMOG tries to curb excesses by these factions. The collaboration between ECOMOG and AFL/ULIMO has changed the dynamics of the war, and raises questions about ECOMOG's commitment to human rights.

Since late October, there has been increasingly serious concern about ECOMOG air attacks using Nigeria's Alpha jets on Taylor territory. Taylor has no air force, and ECOMOG planes can easily reach targets all over the country. Targets have included the port of Buchanan and areas around Gbamga, Kakata, Harbel and Greenville. In addition to reports of ECOMOG attacks on civilian targets, there are also charges of violations of medical neutrality, such as attacks on hospitals. Precise information about the targets and casualties are not available, because independent observers have been prevented for security reasons from travelling to the sites. NPFL officials report that hundreds of civilians have been killed and wounded. Africa Watch calls upon ECOMOG to conduct a thorough investigation into the targets of its air raids. In addition, explicit guarantees should be provided for the neutrality of hospitals and humanitarian relief operations.

There have been many reports, by ECOMOG as well as other neutral sources, of the NPFL using the civilian population or civilian institutions as a shield for its military activities. Using civilians as a shield is a direct violation of the Geneva Conventions. Nevertheless, ECOMOG still has an obligation under international humanitarian law to protect the civilian population, and is prohibited from conducting attacks that, while aiming at a military target, may be expected to inflict disproportionate harm on the civilian population.

The Armed Forces of Liberia.—From the November 1990 cease-fire until it was attacked on October 15, the AFL was effectively encamped and maintained a fairly low profile. All that has now changed, and a pattern has emerged of AFL soldiers engaging in looting and armed robbery, with civilians fearing reprisals if they report the incidents. To most Liberians, the AFL is virtually synonymous with looting.

One high profile case illustrating the AFL behavior occurred in January 1993; Brian Garnham, a British citizen working at the Liberian Institute for Biomedical Research, an affiliate of the New York Blood Center, was killed by the AFL. Garnham and his American wife, Betsy Brotman, had lived in Liberia for many years. Witnesses report that on January 31, the AFL arrived at the compound. Three AFL soldiers kicked down the door and proceeded to shoot Garnham, while he pleaded for his life. After the killing, AFL soldiers went on a looting spree, emptying the laboratory compound of whatever they could carry.

In late April, five AFL soldiers, including two officers, were charged in connection with Garnham's murder; however, none was charged with murder. The most severe charges were brought against the platoon commander, Captain Gbazai Gaye, who was charged under Art. 131 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ) for perjury, and under Art. 133, for conduct unbecoming an officer. The other four are expected to be charged under Art. 134 of the UCMJ, a general article covering disorders and neglect to the discipline of the armed forces.

ULIMO.—Meanwhile, ULIMO is demonstrating early signs of a pattern of behavior similar to that of the NPFL: it is limiting the free movement of people and goods in its territory; it denied Africa Watch a pass to travel to its areas without a ULIMO "escort;" and it has established checkpoints along the roads, at which civilians often face harassment. There have also been reports of atrocities by ULIMO forces, and Liberian human rights monitors have raised concerns about abuses such as summary executions, beatings and arbitrary arrests.

Documenting human rights conditions in ULIMO territory has proved to be difficult, largely because ULIMO has denied access to independent observers. Still, Liberian human rights monitors have raised questions about ULIMO's conduct. In a letter dated January 26, 1993, for example, the Catholic Church's Justice and Peace Commission cited a series of deaths, assaults and arrests attributed to ULIMO fighters. More recently, press articles have reported abusive conduct by ULIMO forces in upper Lofa county. Another concern involves the use of child soldiers by ULIMO.

There is also a tribal element to ULIMO. A split has taken place between Alhadji Kromah and Raleigh Seekie. Woman, a Mandingo, is also secretary general of the Movement for the Redemption of Liberian Muslims (MRM), formed in October 1990. Seekie seems to represent the Krahn elements of ULIMO, though he is not himself a Krahn.

The U.N. Role.—The U.N.'s role in Liberia also deserves scrutiny. Although the United Nations has contributed significantly to the emergency relief and humanitarian aid that has gone to Liberia, the U.N. did not address the Liberian crisis in political terms until November 1992, almost three years after the crisis erupted. All indications are that the U.N. considers Liberia a regional problem best dealt with by ECOWAS, the regional body. While strengthening and supporting the regional organization is a laudable effort, the U.N. should ensure that human rights issues figure prominently in the regional organization's efforts and that the organization itself does not contribute to aggravating the war.

In fact, the promotion and protection of human rights has become part of the U.N.'s efforts at conflict resolution in other parts of the world. Human rights issues have figured prominently in U.N. brokered agreements in such diverse places as El Salvador, Cambodia and Haiti. The U.N. should apply some of that experience to Liberia.

After finally addressing the Liberian crisis in November and imposing an arms embargo, the Secretary General dispatched a special representative, Trevor Gordon-Sommers, to investigate the situation. Human rights language is notably absent from his report, which was released in mid-March, thus missing yet another occasion to insert human rights protections into the peace negotiations. The report suggested that there might be a role for U.N. observers to monitor a new cease-fire agreement, but foresaw no human rights monitoring component to their mandate.

This is an unfortunate omission, since it would have afforded an unprecedented opportunity for transparency throughout the country. The mandate of the proposed U.N. cease-fire monitors must be expanded to include human rights monitoring and documentation.

The need to involve broader elements of civil society—specifically elders, community leaders and women's groups—in the process of reconciliation is noted by the U.N. This is a critical point which deserves greater emphasis: the encouragement and strengthening of civil society throughout the country must be a priority. Already in Monrovia, there are significant aspects of civil society that are functioning, including an independent press; relief, medical and children's organizations; and human rights groups. When the prospects for long-term rehabilitation of Liberian society are contemplated, few factors will be as critical as the status of civil society. The status of civil society in territory occupied by the NPFL and ULIMO also must be addressed, and efforts made to nurture independent initiatives that are attempting to function.

In a recent development that might challenge the U.N.'s humanitarian mandate in Liberia, ECOWAS is stepping up its effort to block cross-border humanitarian assistance to NPFL territory from the Ivory Coast. In early May 1993, ECOWAS Executive Secretary Abass Bundu called on relief organizations to cease all cross-border relief operations and announced the establishment of a "tranquility corridor" through which relief supplies would be transported, policed by ECOMOG. Taylor strongly opposes such a plan. ECOMOG contends that Taylor uses the cross-border convoys to transport supplies for his forces, and has told relief organizations that they must inform ECOMOG when they conduct cross-border operations. However, humanitarian aid is exempt from the U.N. embargo of November 1992, and ECOWAS's stand contradicts the U.N.'s mandate to deliver such assistance.

These latest efforts to curtail the delivery of humanitarian assistance are very disturbing. Relief assistance must not be used as a weapon of war. It seems clear that the civilians in NPFL territory will suffer if all cross-border operations are prevented, and neither ECOMOG nor ECOWAS should be able to prohibit such assistance.

U.S. Policy.—The U.S. Government has done a complete about-face regarding Liberia: after years of supporting the brutal and corrupt regime of former President Doe, making it the largest recipient of U.S. aid in sub-Saharan Africa, the U.S. today has withdrawn from Liberia more or less completely. In view of past extensive U.S. involvement, that withdrawal has created a political vacuum that ECOWAS has been unable and the U.N. has been unwilling to fulfill. The United States has a special responsibility toward Liberia, given both the long-standing historical ties between the countries and the U.S. support for Doe. European governments and international agencies regard Liberia as a "U.S. problem" which they expect the United States to take the lead in solving.

To the extent that the U.S. has a policy towards Liberia, the main tenets are to withhold recognition of any government in Liberia—neither the government nor the National Patriotic Reconstruction Assembly, the civilian arm of the NPFL—reflecting lack of legitimacy of all factions within the country; and diplomatically supporting ECOWAS and its peace plan.

In November 1992, a series of U.S. Government cables were leaked to the NPFL, which in turn released them to the press. The cables appear to be authentic, and provide revealing insights into the U.S. attitude toward ECOMOG, as well as the strained relations between the Senegalese and Nigerian contingents. As a result of these leaks, State Department sources have reported that the ECOMOG commanders are very reluctant to inform the U.S. about their strategies and internal operations. As of May 1993—six months after the appearance of the cables—there has been little apparent effort by U.S. officials to deal with the damaging consequences of the leak.

The U.S. is clearly aware of the increasing human rights problems associated with the ECOMOG intervention, yet U.S. policy still revolves around full support for ECOMOG. There is an obvious discrepancy between what American officials say in private, as evidenced by the leaked cables and other statements intended to be off-the-record—such as then Assistant Secretary of State Herman Cohen's statements questioning ECOMOG's neutrality, which aired on the BBC in November 1992—and their public positions. Given the Clinton Administration's latest request for \$12 million for ECOWAS's peacekeeping activities, the U.S. is likely to have some leverage over ECOMOG's behavior. It is critical for the administration make clear its concern about human rights violations by both ECOMOG and the forces with which it is allied, and condition its aid on respect for human rights.

The U.S. should apply to Liberia the approach being pursued by the U.S. for the Vienna Conference on Human Rights, described in the draft U.S. Human Rights Ac-

tion Plan. Under this plan, the U.S. calls for human rights to be "an integrated element of all U.N. peacekeeping, humanitarian, conflict resolution, elections monitoring, development programs, and other activities." It goes on to state that human rights work should be included in peacekeeping operations, as has been done in El Salvador and Cambodia.

There are other ways in which the U.S. can weigh in effectively for human rights in Liberia. One involves the situation in Nimba County, where ULIMO is advancing well ahead of ECOMOG. The United States must bring pressure to bear on both the ECOMOG commanders and the ECOWAS heads of state to use their leverage to stop the ULIMO and AFL advance and to ensure that ECOMOG reaches Nimba County first and acts in accordance with international humanitarian law. Given the history of abuses in Nimba County in 1985 and again in 1990, it is imperative that ULIMO not be allowed to reach Nimba first. In addition, the U.S. must make it very clear to all the warring factions—the NPFL, the AFL and ULIMO—that human rights issues will directly impact U.S. foreign assistance, and that the U.S. will distance itself from any force that continues to violate human rights and international humanitarian law.

Accountability for Past Abuses.—One of the tragedies of Liberia is that the issue of accountability for past human rights abuses has been avoided in all the peace negotiations. Africa Watch believes that those responsible for egregious human rights abuses in Liberia must be held accountable for their crimes. Moreover, the U.S. should insist that it is the responsibility of all parties to the conflict to seek accountability for abuses and punish those responsible.

There is growing discussion within Liberia of a general amnesty for all combatants. Many Liberians also fear that a blanket amnesty would lead to a wave of vengeance killings, with individuals settling scores on their own. Seeking accountability does not contradict calls for a conditional amnesty. Africa Watch does not oppose an amnesty as a part of a peace settlement covering the offense of taking up arms and for general acts of war, but strongly opposes an amnesty for war crimes or crimes against humanity. For example, gross atrocities which have characterized this conflict, such as the AFL's massacre of 600 women and children in July 1990 and the NPFL murder of the five American nuns in 1992 should never be included in any amnesty.

Until such time as a court system could handle cases of accountability for past abuses, some form of Truth Commission might be established, on the model of El Salvador, to deter acts of revenge. In El Salvador, a group of distinguished persons was appointed by the U.N.'s Secretary General to conduct a six-month review of "grave acts of violence * * * whose mark on society demands with great urgency public knowledge of the truth." Although the circumstances in Liberia differ, important lessons can be learned from the role human rights played in El Salvador's peace process, especially the effort to seek accountability.

* * *

The international community also has had ample opportunity to raise human rights issues in Liberia, including protection for the civilian population and accountability for past human rights abuses. Instead, they have watched a situation develop in which the ultimate political solution will be linked to avoiding accountability on all sides, thus perpetuating the atmosphere of impunity which has plagued Liberia for so long. Accordingly, the international community bears some responsibility for the continuing human rights abuses in Liberia.

Africa Watch looks forward to working with the Africa Subcommittee in bringing greater attention to the human rights situation in Liberia here in the U.S. and internationally. Thank you for this opportunity.

Senator SIMON. Thank you. Mr. Askin.

STATEMENT OF STEVE ASKIN, FREELANCE JOURNALIST, NEW YORK

Mr. ASKIN. Mr. Chairman, thank you very much for inviting me to testify today on the urgent issues facing the United States and its policy toward Zaire and toward that country's former president, Mobutu Sese Seko.

I refer to Mr. Mobutu as a former president because his term of office expired in December 1991, and because a full understanding

of questions of sovereignty and legitimacy is absolutely critical if we are to promote peaceful change in Zaire.

Past hearings before this committee have already examined the terrible human rights abuses in Zaire, the impoverishment of the people, the destruction of human services. I am going to focus on the key policy questions; what our Government can do, and what it can do unilaterally as well as in cooperation with others to help the people of Zaire speedily and peacefully complete their transition to democracy.

I think it is important to emphasize that it is their transition. Zaire has an internationally recognized transitional parliamentary body, the High Council of the Republic, which has selected a prime minister, Etienne Tshisekedi, and has approved his cabinet. The U.S. has already expressed verbal support for those institutions. It needs to do everything possible to strengthen them while pressing Mobutu to step aside.

Now, if we are going to act effectively, we need a full understanding of Mobutu's system of governance, which is often referred to as kleptocracy, or government by theft. Through most of the past quarter century, and you will see a lot more documentation on this in my prepared statement, Mobutu has annually misappropriated several hundred million dollars worth of money and resources belonging to the people and the government of Zaire.

My research suggests that in many years, he has misdirected up to 20 percent of the government operating budget, up to 30 percent of mineral export revenues, up to 50 percent of the government capital budget. Mobutu uses these funds for luxury consumption, personal investment abroad, corrupt payments to his political allies, and for other activities which fall completely outside the realm of normal and legitimate government. This wealth is his source of strength, but it also his Achilles heel. He enjoys power. He also enjoys luxury. He has to be shown that he cannot keep both.

In my written statement, I talk much more about the methods he has used to take money from the people of Zaire. With the limited time available, however, let me focus on options for getting him to stop.

Mr. Moose, I know, spoke of discussions leading toward some unspecified multilateral plan of action against Mobutu. While multilateral action is important, I believe the urgency of Zaire's crisis permits no further delay. In talking about Togo, Mr. Moose referred fairly persuasively to the primary role that other countries have played. In the case of Zaire, the U.S. was intimately involved in installing Mobutu. It has worked with him closely for 28 years. There is no justification for arguing that anybody other than the U.S. should take the lead.

There are at least five classes of pressures which can have an effect on President Mobutu, or former President Mobutu. First, and though very unusual, in some ways it is the most important, there are certain kinds of personal sanctions which have already been discussed. Governments including the U.S., but it does have to be multilateral, can move to a comprehensive freeze on his bank accounts, on the foreign properties he controls, on the business assets he controls, including those which he holds through family members and political associates.

I spoke this morning with a senior member of the High Council, Kibassa Maliba, who confirmed to me what I already have understood to be the case, which is that there is very good evidence that the World Bank, the IMF, and many Western governments have a great deal of information on where these assets are. This freeze should be a first step toward preparing to return the assets to the Zairian people when a legitimate government takes power in Kinshasa. This is a very powerful club to hold over Mobutu's head, and it may actually open the door for a compromise in which he would permanently relinquish power in exchange for some easing of the threat.

Second, there is an urgent and immediate need for financial sanctions. These should be targeted very specifically against the Mobutu-Birindwa government, Birindwa being the illegitimate prime minister who Mobutu has attempted to install. Despite its lack of legitimacy or international recognition, that government has effective control over Zaire's government ministries. It should be suspended from the World Bank and the IMF, and that suspension should be coupled with moves toward recognition of the High Council and Mr. Tshisekedi's transitional government as Zaire's representatives in all multilateral bodies.

Immediate action is also needed to isolate Zaire's central bank which is operated by a Mobutu appointee in defiance of the High Council, and is currently serving partly to launder diamond smuggling proceeds.

In a third area, there is an urgent need for an arms embargo, which would also include pressures to cut off any military advisor relationships.

Fourth, there is a need for a strict embargo on mineral exports, particularly copper, cobalt, diamonds, and gold because the proceeds of many of these exports are being used to support President Mobutu, not the people of Zaire.

Fifth, it is absolutely incredible that Mobutu's ambassadors and diplomats still occupy most Zairian Embassies, including the Embassy in Washington. They are not representatives of a government. They should be expelled. The transitional government's representative should be accredited in their place.

The U.S. should furthermore insist that U.S. corporations operating in Zaire, most notably several of the major oil companies, should pay taxes only to the legitimate authorities and hold any payments to the illegitimate Mobutu-Birindwa government.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Askin follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF STEVE ASKIN

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, thank you for inviting me to testify today on the urgent issues facing the United States in its policy toward Zaire and toward that country's former president, Mobutu Sese Seko.

I refer to Mr. Mobutu as a former president because his term of office expired in December 1991, and because a full understanding of questions of sovereignty and legitimacy is absolutely critical if we are to promote peaceful change in Zaire.

Past hearings before this subcommittee have examined the terrible human rights abuses in Zaire, the impoverishment of its people and the destruction of its infrastructure and human service structures. Witnesses at your least full hearing on Zaire, in November 1991, convincingly explained why Mobutu's failure to relinquish power was already plunging Zaire into chaos and violence.

Conditions have grown immeasurably worse since then, and every day that Mobutu delays his departure makes it more likely that Zaire will become the next

Liberia or the next Somalia. However, rather than offering a potentially endless account of the latest abuses, I will focus my testimony on the key question facing policymakers: what can our government do—both unilaterally and in cooperation with others—to help the people of Zaire speedily and peacefully complete their transition to democracy. Because economic pressures offer the last hope for peaceful transition, my testimony will draw on research I have conducted, as a journalist specializing in African economic affairs, on the Zairian economy under the Mobutu regime.

Without belaboring the point, I will also touch on the reasons our government has an especially strong obligation to help Zaire undo the great damage wrought by its past support for Mobutu and encouragement of some of his most corrupt practices. Secretary of State Christopher heralded a long overdue policy reversal at the African American Institute last month, when he declared that Africa's future lies "not with corrupt dictators like Mobutu, but with courageous democrats in every part of the continent." Yet these words will have little practical meaning unless they lead to swift and effective action.

THE ECONOMIC CONTEXT: MOBUTU SYSTEM

To act effectively, we need a sophisticated understanding Mobutu's system of rule, often referred to as "kleptocracy" or government by theft. For the past 28 years, Mobutu has carefully and thoughtfully refined this system for transforming the public resources of Zaire into private wealth, while using bribery, coercion and violence to thwart all movements for change. This system has transformed wealth which rightly belongs to Zaire's 40 million people into a personal business empire serving the private interests of one man and his tiny circle of supporters.

A vast body of evidence suggests that, through the most of the past quarter century, Mobutu has misappropriated several hundred million dollars annually. In the years for which the most detailed evidence is available, Mobutu and his associates have misdirected up to 20 percent of the Zairian government operating budget, up to 30 percent of mineral export revenues, up to 50 percent of the government capital budget. Mobutu uses these funds for luxury consumption, for personal investment abroad, for corrupt payments to political allies, and for other activities which fall completely outside the parameters of legitimate governance.

Past attempts to "reform" Mobutu ended in utter failure. The most serious such effort came during the Carter administration when—partly at the behest of the United States—the International Monetary Fund sent a senior international banker to monitor the Zairian Central Bank and promote financial integrity. That banker, Erwin Blumenthal, soon left in frustration, declaring that "the corruptive system in Zaire with all its wicked and ugly manifestations, its mismanagement and fraud will destroy all endeavors" for change.

At least four types of financial flows have served to enrich Mobutu. In recent years, he has relied primarily upon funds taken from (1) Zaire's treasury, (2) Zaire's mineral export revenues and (3) foreign aid and investment funds. In the past, Mobutu also benefited significantly from covert payments by foreign governments, including the United States.

DIVERSION OF STATE FUNDS

The Zairian state treasury itself has provided Mobutu his most reliable and consistent source of funds. Unpublished studies prepared by the World Bank and the IMF show that direct government appropriations to Mobutu's presidential office have often consumed 15 to 20 percent of the government's operating budget.

Yet these generous appropriations were not sufficient to satisfy Mobutu's demand for wealth. The same confidential financial studies also show that Mobutu has consistently over spent his "official" presidential appropriation, making up the deficit by taking funds designated for public services. Particularly detailed records are available for the 1986 fiscal year. In that year, Mobutu's parliament allocated about \$60 million to the Presidency and Mobutu-controlled political organizations. However, the Presidency and government-funded political offices actually drew \$172 million—16 percent of the year's total government operating expenditure—from the Zairian treasury. Mobutu's additional expenditures were taken from the budgets of the Health Ministry, Education Ministry and other key ministries.

Further evidence exists of Mobutu-directed spending for which no meaningful records can be found. A 1989 World Bank memo showed, for example, that full 18 percent of the year's state expenditures were spent for unexplained "other goods and services."

This massive mis-spending leaves almost no money for legitimate government functions. World Bank figures indicate that, among all developing nations for which figures are available, Zaire devotes the smallest percentage of official spending to

human services. In 1990, education received only 1.4 percent of Zairian government outlays; health, 0.7 percent; other social services, 1.5 percent.

EMBEZZLEMENT OF EXPORT PROCEEDS

Export revenues provide Mobutu his most important source of hard currency. Identifiable "leakages" often exceed \$100 million per year. In 1988, for example, \$400 million disappeared without explanation from Zaire's mineral export proceeds. This represented about 30 percent of the annual revenue of the company involved, the state-owned copper and cobalt mining firm, Gécamines.

Consistent reports of similar diversions date back the founding of Zaire's state minerals marketing system in 1974. In some cases, the exact destination of diverted funds remains a mystery; in others, direct evidence exists that Mobutu or members of his family were the beneficiaries. These abuses have helped to drive Gécamines to the brink of collapse, its output—once the mainstay of Zaire's formal sector economy—has dropped by two-thirds in recent years.

Despite ample evidence of past abuses, international institutions appear to have continued some lending to Gécamines. As recently as Monday of this week, the Mobutu-appointed President-Director General of Gécamines reported that the company is the recipient of some continuing World Bank credits.

Mobutu may now be planning one final raid on Gécamines assets, through a recently announced plan to privatize major portions of the company. Whatever the ultimate merits of privatization, if carried out under present conditions, it will merely provide Mobutu another opportunity for embezzlement.

Copper and cobalt are not the only sources of mineral revenue diversions. Over the past year, diamond smuggling appears to have replaced copper and cobalt exports as Mobutu's primary foreign exchange source. Some reports suggest that diamond exporters with close ties to Mobutu, his family, or his generals may have netted as much as \$300 million last year.

MISUSE OF FOREIGN AID, FOREIGN LOANS, AND FOREIGN INVESTOR FUNDS

There is a long history of systematic Mobutist misappropriation of foreign aid grants and multilateral development loans. As early as 1975, during a hearing before this very subcommittee, former Senator Dick Clark raised questions about reports that \$5 million worth of foreign aid was being annually diverted to "private officials of the Mobutu government."

Last year, a committee of Zaire's Sovereign National Conference (predecessor to the High Council of the Republic) found—during its investigation of "misacquired wealth"—evidence last year that Mobutu received kickbacks totaling 7 percent of expenditures for the Inga-Shaba power line, the largest construction project in Zaire's history. The project was partly financed with guarantees from the U.S. Import-Export bank. If the full history of Zaire's foreign borrowing is ever reconstructed, it may show that most of the nation's foreign debt, which totals more than \$10 billion, arises from loans whose proceeds were stolen or squandered.

DIRECT FOREIGN GOVERNMENT BRIBES

We as Americans cannot ignore our own government's role in establishing Mobutu's patterns of corruption. Roger Morris, who handled African affairs for the National Security Council in the Johnson and Nixon administrations, has estimated that Mobutu received close to \$150 million in bribes and secret payments from the Central Intelligence Agency during the first decade or so of his regime. In more recent years, there have been credible accusations which deserve further investigation involving financial flows in the opposite direction: irregular funds transfers possibly made by Mobutu to U.S. and European business officials who have lobbied their governments on his behalf.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

With the arrival of a new administration, many Zairians hoped the U.S. would take leadership in organizing multilateral pressure for Mobutu's rapid departure. The Clinton administration has sent some welcome signals. It has placed an appropriate stress on its opposition to Mobutu, its recognition of the High Council of the Republic (HCR) and Prime Minister Etienne Tshisekedi as Zaire's legitimate transitional political authorities, and its support for anti-Mobutu sanctions.

Yet the administration's expressed support for international sanctions against Mobutu has not yet been translated into action. As we have seen elsewhere, most recently in the case of Haiti, sanctions delayed swiftly become sanctions evaded.

In the past, some officials have suggested that the U.S. must await the preparation of a comprehensive multilateral plan of action before imposing sanctions against Mobutu. While multilateral action is important, I believe the urgency of Zaire's crisis permits no further delays.

At least five types of pressure against Mobutu have been proposed:

- Actions aimed directly at his personal fortune, including a freeze on his foreign bank accounts and those of his family and political associates;
- Economic sanctions directed against Zairian government, including former suspension of Zaire from the IMF and World Bank;
- Sanctions aimed at Mobutu's sources of foreign currency income, including an embargo on Zaire's copper, cobalt and other exports;
- An arms embargo designed to deprive Mobutu of weapons used to suppress opposition; and
- Diplomatic action, including expulsion of Mobutu's ambassadors from Western capitals.

If well-designed, these measures could isolate Mobutu and facilitate his departure before Zaire collapses into full-fledged civil war.

Yet the proposed list of sanctions must be creatively broadened if it is to have any real effect. Moreover, the isolation of Mobutu should be coupled with efforts to strengthen the HCR and the Tshisekedi cabinet which are, however imperfect, the only institutions in Zaire with a legitimate claim to represent the political will of the nation. In designing an effective sanctions package, the following factors must be considered:

(1) As assets freeze limited to bank accounts will have relatively little effect, because bank deposits probably represent only a small fraction of Mobutu's wealth. To be effective, a freeze must also encompass real estate holdings; equity interests in a variety of foreign business ventures; and all other identifiable assets purchased from the profits of kleptocracy. Moreover, a freeze should be explicitly designed as the first step toward the seizure of ill-gotten assets; the possible prosecution of Mobutu and his associates for any financial crimes they have committed; and the repatriation of illegally-obtained wealth to Zaire when a legitimate government assumes effective power in Kinshasa.

I would reluctantly also suggest that a "carrot" be tied to the assets freeze "stick." Mobutu appears to be haunted by the prospect of a Marcos-like exile in which he and his family will be hounded to their graves by a successor state bent on recovering ill-gotten wealth. To encourage his speedy departure from Zaire, Mobutu might therefore be offered some form of partial immunity from assets seizure or other legal action if he speedily relinquishes power and accepts permanent exile.

(2) Economic pressures should be targeted against the Mobutu-Faustin Birindwa government which, despite its lack of legitimacy or international recognition, holds effective control over Zaire's government ministries. This government's suspension from the World Bank and IMF should be coupled with moves toward recognition of the HCR-Tshisekedi transitional government as the representative of Zaire in all multilateral bodies and negotiations. Some steps were taken in this direction last month, when senior officials at the IMF and World Bank met with Tshisekedi's widely-respected finance minister, Jules Sambwa. However, there are disturbing indications that the World Bank—which alone among multilateral lending institutions continues to disburse funds to Zaire—may still be cooperating with Gécamines, with the Office des Routes, and with other historically corrupt entities still under Mobutu's control.

Immediate action is also needed to isolate Zaire's Central Bank, which is operated by a Mobutu appointee in defiance of the HCF and currently serves party to launder diamond smuggling proceeds. This rogue institution should be excluded from all international funds transfer systems until Mobutu relinquishes control. Mobutu's power could be further undermined through an embargo on the currency notes, printed abroad, which he uses to pay his security forces.

Increased public disclosure and transparency on the part of lenders and aid donors could also help speed Mobutu's departure and assist Zairian efforts to investigate the "misacquired wealth" of Mobutu and his associates. Lender and donor agencies—including the World Bank, the IMF and the U.S. Agency for International Development—should offer the investigators active assistance. Records held by these and other international agencies could prove invaluable in tracking misdirected funds. The mere threat of public disclosure might be a useful source of leverage encouraging Mobutu's retirement.

(3) An arms embargo is symbolically important but may have relatively little practical effect, since Mobutu has a monopoly on arms already in the country. However, a report last year by Africa Watch indicated that several countries—including

Egypt, Israel and South Africa—may be providing vital technical support to Mobutu's military. In addition embargoing weapons, the U.S. should use all available means to press these and other governments to sever military links with Mobutu.

(4) Because Mobutu's destructive regime has already driven the copper and cobalt mines to a virtual standstill, diamonds are the most important target for any export embargo.

Embargoing diamonds is virtually impossible since any smuggler can carry several hundred thousand dollars worth in his or her pocket. Nonetheless, authorities in Antwerp, Tel Aviv, New York and other major diamond cutting centers would—if determined to do so—have relatively little difficulty pinpointing the major buyers and sellers of Zairian precious stones. If an embargo were coupled with close observation of Mobutu's customers and harsh prosecution when violators are caught, they will quickly turn to other diamond sources. A ban on air links Zaire would also help to greatly reduce the flow of smuggled mineral products.

So that these anti-theft measures won't rebound against Zaire's 40 million citizens, they should be coupled with a program of greatly increased humanitarian aid. Humanitarian assistance should be funneled through non-government organizations, not through agencies controlled by the Mobutu-Birindwa government. The U.S. should support and encourage speedy completion of a planned U.N. assessment of humanitarian need and the broadest possible multilateral aid effort.

(5) Expulsion of Mobutu's ambassadors and diplomats should be viewed as merely the first step toward international recognition of the transitional government. Though the U.S. and the European Community have repeatedly declared that they view the HCR as Zaire's highest legitimate authority, Mobutu-appointed ambassadors still occupy most Zairian embassies, including the embassy in Washington. In addition to according recognition only to representatives chosen by the transitional government, the U.S. should insist that U.S. corporations operating in Zaire pay taxes only to the legitimate authorities and halt any payments to the Mobutu-Birindwa government.

I realize that some of these recommendations lack precedent in the history of international economic sanctions. Yet nothing less will work if Zaire is to be afforded any chance of achieving peaceful political transition.

Senator SIMON. Thank you. I thank all four of you. In the Zaire situation, and we will—I assume someone is here from the State Department to take in this testimony, but we will also forward your testimony to Secretary Moose, who was just here.

If you were just to say one action in Zaire, Mr. Askin, what would it be?

Mr. ASKIN. I would say that if there is one action, it would be an immediate and comprehensive freeze on all assets and financial flows which are in any way touched by Mr. Mobutu or by the government which he has attempted to install.

Senator SIMON. If the U.S. Government were to say very clearly he should leave the country, would that have an impact?

Mr. ASKIN. It might. And I would say, tragically, if that had happened a year or two ago, if it had happened when his very good friend George Bush was President, it would have had an effect. It may still have an effect today.

I think today, however, because things have gone on so long, because Mobutu has gradually reinforced the guarded position that he occupies, I think that the only way a statement from the U.S. that he must go would have an effect is if it were really tied to very specific threats of actions which will make his life difficult, make his financial life even miserable, you might say, should he choose not to leave.

Senator SIMON. All right. I regret to say that that buzzer you just heard means there is a roll call vote on the floor. What I would like to do is just ask some very brief questions and get your re-

sponses, and then we would like to submit additional questions to you for the record.

Ms. Fleischman, you mentioned, among other things, ECOMOG human rights abuses. Are these common? Frankly, I have not heard much about this, although in any kind of a military situation there are occasional abuses.

Ms. FLEISCHMAN. We have just released a report at Africa Watch about the ECOMOG intervention and human rights. I will get a copy to you after this hearing. Our main concerns, in terms of ECOMOG's human rights abuses are two fold. First of all, the alliance that it has formed with the AFL, the Armed Forces of Liberia and ULIMO, both of which are known human rights abusers. We do not believe that ECOMOG has tried to control adequately the behavior of these groups and, in fact, there is evidence to suggest that ECOMOG has actually gone as far as arming some of these groups. This is very problematic because it undermines ECOMOG's credibility and, therefore, its ability to bring peace.

The other factor which has caused increasing concern involves ECOMOG air strikes in NPFL territory. There are concerns that ECOMOG has bombed civilian targets and, additionally, violated medical neutrality by attacking hospitals. We have not been able to independently investigate these charges, but we outline them in the report and we call for an immediate investigation.

Other than that, I think it is important to note that very important human rights benefits flowed from ECOMOG's presence in Monrovia, and one is hard pressed to visit Monrovia without hearing time and time again, thank God for ECOMOG.

Senator SIMON. You hear Sister Stephanie Mertens recommend, among other things, recognition of the government in Monrovia now. What is your position on that?

Ms. FLEISCHMAN. Africa Watch does not take a position on recognition of either of the governments, although we do recognize that the U.S. has not really had a policy toward Liberia, and it is evidenced by the fact that there has been no recognition. There has been kind of a wish-washy attitude throughout the Bush years.

Senator SIMON. Sister Stephanie Mertens, you start off by mentioning reconciliation. Now, let me just underscore that. The American Revolution succeeded because Jefferson, and Madison, and Washington, among other things, decided that they were not going to take it out on the people who supported the British, and we come together as a people.

The French Revolution took a different course and was much less successful immediately following that because of that. In Poland today it is very interesting that Lech Walesa, who was imprisoned by General Jaruzelski, when he became the leader did not move to imprison the man who had been the military dictator, so that reconciliation could take place.

I think what you are calling for is really not only a reflection of your religious views, which I am sure it does, but it is also very practical in bringing a country together after this.

You mentioned having a committee to investigate the tragic slaying of the five nuns in your order. There are those who say it is very difficult to investigate until we have a country pulled together.

Is your suggestion for an immediate committee or waiting until this whole situation gets resolved?

Sister MERTENS. I think that we would be willing to accept that it wait until the crisis is resolved. We feel a concern for the loss of all life that has taken place in Liberia, by no means exclusively the five that happened to be members of our congregation. We do respect the concern of Liberians themselves who feel very sad that this happened to people who were there in the mission and for the purposes that they were there, and I guess they do not want it to be left without the equivalent of a truth commission or some kind of resolution of what actually happened there. Do you understand?

Senator SIMON. Yes, I do understand. Dr. Graham, if you could just give one bit of advice to Secretary Warren Christopher, what would that be?

Dr. GRAHAM. I think my first recommended policy for the international community and the U.S. would be nonrecognition of the current electoral plans and threats of sanctions until they are reformed.

Senator SIMON. All right. I regret that we will have to adjourn the hearing. I thank all of you very much. Let me assure all of you, this is not the end of our concern on these three countries. Thank you very much.

[Whereupon, at 3:55 p.m., the subcommittee adjourned, to reconvene subject to the call of the Chair.]

APPENDIX

STATEMENT OF DR. ABASS BUNDU, EXECUTIVE SECRETARY OF ECOWAS

This statement is predicated upon the assumption that the history of the Liberian conflict and the ECOWAS peace initiative for resolving it is already well-known to members of the subcommittee on Africa of the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee. The focus, therefore, will be on contemporary developments dating from July 1992 to the present, relating to the resolution of the conflict. However, to appreciate the present, it may be necessary to recall at least some of the essential features of past developments.

THE ECOWAS PEACE PLAN

The situation in Liberia in August 1990, when heads of State and Government of the ECOWAS's Standing Mediation Committee met in Banjul to adopt the ECOWAS Peace Plan, is best encapsulated in the following paragraphs from the Banjul Summit Communique of that Committee:

"The failure of the warring parties to cease hostilities has led to the massive destruction of property and the massacre by all the parties of thousands of innocent civilians including foreign nationals, women and children some of whom had sought sanctuary in churches, hospitals, diplomatic missions and under the Red Cross protection, contrary to all recognized standards of civilized behavior. Worse still, there are corpses lying unburied in the streets of cities and towns, which could lead to a serious outbreak of an epidemic. The civil war has also trapped thousands of foreign nationals, including ECOWAS citizens, without any means of escape or protection.

The result of all this is a state of anarchy and the total breakdown of law and order in Liberia. Presently, there is a government in Liberia which cannot govern and contending factions which are holding the entire population as hostage depriving them of food health facilities and other basic necessities of life.

These developments have traumatized the Liberian population and greatly shocked the people of the subregion and the rest of the international community. They have also led to hundreds of thousands of Liberians being displaced and made refugees in neighboring countries, and the spilling of hostilities into neighboring countries.

Against this background, ECOWAS adopted the following Peace Plan:

- (a) that the warring parties observe an immediate ceasefire;
- (b) that an ECOWAS Ceasefire Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) be set up to monitor and verify the ceasefire, restore law and order to create the necessary environment for free and fair elections to be held;
- (c) that a National Conference of Liberian warring factions, political parties and other interest groups be held for the purpose of establishing a broad-based interim government acceptable to the Liberian people;
- (d) that general and presidential elections be held within 12 months; and
- (e) that ECOWAS and other international bodies observe the elections in order to ensure that they are free and fair.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ECOWAS PEACE PLAN

ECOMOG, made up of air, sea, and land forces of The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Nigeria and Sierra Leone, contributed on a voluntary basis, arrived in Monrovia on August 24, 1990. Later Mali and Senegal joined but the latter withdrew in January 1993. ECOMOG's mandate was to secure the cessation of hostilities, perform a peacekeeping role and restore law and order so that free and fair elections could be held.

ECOMOG's arrival in Monrovia was welcomed by all except the NPFL led by Charles Taylor. Its initial progress in reducing hostilities was greatly hampered by

NPFL aggression. In fact, Taylor formally declared war on ECOMOG and his opposition to ECOMOG did not diminish even with the death of President Samuel Doe whose removal from office Taylor had always maintained, and had made the world to believe, was the sole purpose for starting his war. Consequently, ECOMOG was, on September 12, 1990, authorized to undertake defensive action which prevailed until November 28, 1990, when a ceasefire was brokered by ECOWAS between NPFL and the other warring parties (INPEL of Prince Johnson and AFL).

After that, ECOMOG was able to establish buffer zones between the warring parties: make Monrovia and its environs safe and habitable; facilitate the movement of humanitarian relief supplies; repair and reactivate essential services; evacuate hundreds of thousands of Liberian and other foreign nationals trapped in Monrovia and elsewhere during the war; repatriate Liberians after the ceasefire; chair meetings between the warring parties during negotiations of a Ceasefire Agreement in 1991 and monitor the implementation of the Ceasefire Agreement and other agreements, including the Yamoussoukro IV Accord. Believing that Charles Taylor was then ready to advance the peace process, ECOMOG went further and deployed an advance party of 600 men into NPFL-held areas, only for Taylor later to take all of them hostage. He also attacked and murdered six members of the Sonegalese contingent who had been deployed to establish a buffer zone between Liberia and Sierra Leone in order to prevent cross-border military activities into Sierra Leone. Although these ECOMOG soldiers were later released, they were stripped of all their uniforms and weapons as well as their personal belongings.

This essentially characterized the situation in Liberia from the end of November 1990 to October 15, 1992. The preoccupation of ECOMOG was to assist in the implementation of the various complementary peace accords for Liberia under a climate of relative calm until October 15, 1992, when the NPFL launched its second major aggression against the population of Liberia and against ECOMOG positions in its bid to attain political power by force of arms. ECOMOG had to be authorized to go into peace enforcement action. It was mandated to achieve three goals. First, to defend itself decisively; second, to restore the safe-haven status Monrovia had enjoyed prior to October 15 so that it could continue to provide sanctuary to refugees and displaced persons; and third, to convince Charles Taylor and his movement that military victory as a vehicle to political power in Liberia is impossible of attainment and that the only acceptable procedure is by way of free and fair elections. This enforcement action was to continue until these three objectives were achieved and a ceasefire put in place between the warring factions.

With regard to the formation of an interim government, two national conferences have been held by Liberians: the first in Banjul in September/October 1990 and the second in Monrovia in March/April 1991. At both meetings an Interim Government of National Unity was set up under the leadership of Dr. Amos Sawyer. At the Banjul Conference Charles Taylor declined the invitation by ECOWAS and Liberians to attend. At the second Conference in Monrovia, his delegation participated. All attempts by ECOWAS and other well-meaning interlocutors to bring him personally to the Conference proved unsuccessful. When the tide appeared to be running against his ambition to be elected interim president of Liberia, his delegation walked out of the Conference. Notwithstanding, the Conference, after re-electing Amos Sawyer president, reserved certain executive and legislative positions for Taylor's movement. He declined to accept these as well. The other warring parties accepted not only the verdict of the Conference, but also agreed to serve in the interim government. This remains the position to this day.

THE ROLE OF THE OAU AND THE UNITED NATIONS

ECOWAS, the OAU and the UN have cooperated admirably throughout the development of the ECOMOG Peace Plan for Liberia. In the words of the UN Secretary-General:

"Liberia represents a good example of a systematic cooperation between the United Nations and a regional organization, as envisaged in Chapter VIII of the Charter. From the beginning, diplomatic and even military initiatives have been taken by ECOWAS. The Yamoussoukro IV Accord was arrived at as a result of the efforts of ECOWAS and it has been the responsibility of ECOWAS to ensure the implementation of the provisions of that Accord. The role of the Security Council has been one of supporting the initiatives and endeavors of ECOWAS. This is clear from the presidential statements issued by the Council on 22 January 1991 and 7 May 1992. It was at the initiative of ECOWAS that the Security Council convened on 19 November 1992 and adopted resolution 788 (1992). I believe that it would be the wish of the Council to continue and expand, as appropriate, this co-

operative relationship between the United Nations and the concerned regional body.”¹

The OAU Secretary-General has recently appointed an Eminent Person for Liberia who is working closely with ECOWAS. At the request of ECOWAS leaders for the UN to assume a larger role in the Liberian peace process, the UN Secretary-General also appointed a Special Representative for Liberia in November 1992 following the unanimous adoption by the Security Council of Resolution 708 (1992) on 19 November 1992. This resolution commended the efforts of ECOWAS to restore peace, security and stability in Liberia; called upon all parties to the conflict in Liberia to respect and implement the ceasefire and various accords of the peace process; reaffirmed its belief that the Yamoussoukro IV Accord offered the best possible framework for a peaceful resolution of the Liberian conflict imposed under Chapter VII of the Charter a general and complete arms embargo against Liberia, with the exception of arms destined for the sole use of ECOMOG; and requested all states to respect measures established by ECOWAS to bring about a peaceful solution to the conflict. This reinforced the general sanctions imposed by ECOWAS as from 5 November 1992. The resolution further condemned the continuing armed attacks against ECOMOG by one of the parties to the conflict.

The Security Council first considered the question of Liberia on 22 January 1991 when the President of the Council made a statement commending the efforts of ECOWAS and calling upon the parties to the conflict to respect the ceasefire agreement. At a subsequent meeting on 7 May 1992 the Council again commended ECOWAS and the Yamoussoukro IV Accord of 30 October 1991.

Following the report of the Secretary-General the Security Council, on 26 March 1992, adopted resolution 813 (1993). Inter alia, it called upon all states to respect the arms embargo; demanded that all parties fully cooperate with the UN and ECOWAS with a view to ensuring the full and prompt implementation of the Yamoussoukro IV Accord; declared its readiness to consider appropriate measures in support of ECOWAS if any party was unwilling to cooperate in the implementation of the Accord, in particular the encampment and disarmament provisions; requested the UN Secretary-General in consultation with ECOWAS, to consider the possibility of convening a meeting of IGNU and the warring parties after thorough and detailed groundwork, to restate their commitment to the implementation of the Yamoussoukro IV Accord, within all agreed timetable; and further requested the Secretary-General to discuss with ECOWAS the contribution the UN could make in support of the implementation of the Accord, including the deployment of UN observers.

Since November 1992, intensive consultations have been held among ECOWAS leaders. There is a strong consensus for ECOWAS and the UN to facilitate talks between the warring parties leading in particular to a ceasefire encampment, disarmament and demobilization. More generally agreement should be sought for establishing an enabling environment for the holding of elections not later than four to six months from the declaration of a ceasefire. It is envisaged that these talks will commence before the end of June 1993 at a venue that is mutually acceptable to all the parties.

PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED

All peacekeeping efforts undertaken by international organizations have had to contend with a variety of political, legal, logistical, and geographical problems. ECOMOG is no exception; indeed, it had more than its fair share of such problems. Some of these were:

(a) Logistics: ECOMOG was set up on August 7, 1990. It entered Monrovia on August 24, just a little over two weeks of preparation. Though this may be a record in peacekeeping there were serious limitations mainly of a logistical nature. This derived from the fact that all the ECOWAS countries participating in ECOMOG are cash-strapped.

(b) The peacekeeping role of ECOMOG was not immediately accepted by Charles Taylor's NPFL which labeled the arrival of ECOMOG in Liberia as “foreign aggression” which it then proceeded to attack. In the circumstances, ECOMOG had no choice but to employ force in self-defense.

(c) The warring parties were not physically distinguishable one from the other and were indiscriminate in their selection of targets—thus causing high civilian casualties and vast destruction of non-military property including diplo-

¹Report of the UN Secretary-General on the Question of Liberia (UN Doc. S/25402 of 12 March 1993) Para. 40.

matic establishments, private residences, hospitals, churches, schools, university campuses, banks, government offices, and even hotels.

(d) A war fought on ethno-regional lines often degenerates into a genocidal war afflicting women, children, and the aged with the same ferocity, ruthlessness and reckless abandon as it targets men in arms. And the application of international humanitarian law is quite often ignored to say the least, as evidenced by the brutal murder of nuns including five American nuns by the NPFL. In the face of such mounting atrocities, ECOWAS Heads of State, on 7 November 1992, warned all warring parties against the commission of war crimes and crimes against humanity in Liberia.

(e) The refusal by Charles Taylor's NPFL to accept the ECOWAS Peace Plan created many problems. His refusal to accept the Interim Presidency of Amos Sawyer delayed the peace process and invariably frustrated the progress that could have been made. Even in conferences, his insistence on sanctioning only such solutions as were propounded by the NPFL, left many in suspense. The penchant of the NPFL to walk out of meetings when things seemed not to be going their way aborted many efforts at solving the Liberian crisis. It also betrayed the lack of genuineness on the part of the NPFL. All these, coupled with the unprovoked and premeditated aggression by the NPFL against Liberians and ECOMOG on October 15, 1992, clearly showed that Charles Taylor had never seriously opted for a peaceful solution of the Liberian crisis by democratic means.

(f) The factor that has proved most elusive to contain has been the capricious Charles Taylor himself. The popularity that his incursion originally enjoyed stemmed from the fact that he was challenging a feared, unpopular and dictatorial President Doe on the ground that he held power undemocratically, through rigged elections, and that he consistently violated human rights. Taylor claimed initially to have no interest in becoming President and that his mission was solely to rid Liberia of dictatorship. The entire world seemed to have believed him. As a matter of fact, the ECOWAS Mediation Committee was partly inspired by his proclaimed selflessness in prescribing the conditions of eligibility for the Interim Presidency when it decided that no leader of a warring faction should become Interim President and that whoever became Interim President should not stand for the presidential election. Later Mr. Charles Taylor was to label these criteria as unwarranted outside interference. He appears now to be like a man totally consumed by his own vaulting ambition to be president regardless of the consequences his armed activities would have for the innocent people of Liberia and the peace and security of the West African region as a whole.

(g) By walking out of the second National Conference in Monrovia, convened to elect an interim government, Mr. Taylor had shown himself to be a man who did not believe in democracy—the will of the people to choose their leader by means other than brute force—in an age of political pluralism and democracy. He seems to be afraid of democracy.

(h) For two years (November 1990-October 1992), while ECOMOG assumed a classical peacekeeping posture, Taylor took advantage to rearm sufficiently so as to feel confident enough to attack ECOMOG on 15 October 1992. This is further evidence that he was never genuine in the peace negotiations with ECOWAS.

(i) The international community even though endorsing the ECOWAS Peace Plan, did not give the needed material support to lighten the heavy logistical burden of peacekeeping. Only the USA and recently the UK have so far provided assistance. The economic strain this state of affairs has put on the ECOMOG nations is enormous and it is feared that the burden might be getting unbearable. Collapse of ECOMOG due to lack of peace process and of the fragile but invaluable security it has offered to over one and a half million Liberians in Monrovia. It would also adversely affect the situation in Sierra Leone. Thankfully, the Security Council, in Resolution 813, is now showing a willingness to contribute toward sustaining the efforts of ECOWAS. This is long overdue: the failure of ECOMOG could easily make Liberia another Somalia forcing the UN to take full responsibility with all the attendant consequences.

CHALLENGES AND THE ROLE OF THE UNITED STATES

In any civil war situation, peace without complete or nearly complete disarmament is at best tenuous as illustrated by the situation in Angola. Disarmament in such situations is best achieved through negotiation. In the case of Liberia, Heads of State and Government at their Abuja Summit on 7 November 1992, after renew-

ing their call to all the warring parties to declare a ceasefire, directed ECOMOG to ensure not only respect for the ceasefire by all the warring parties, but also that the ceasefire be implemented concurrently with the encampment and disarmament of all combatants of the warring parties as required by the Yamoussoukro IV Accord.

To date, this remains the biggest challenge of all. How can we generate sufficient trust and confidence among the warring parties to facilitate the encampment and disarmament of their forces? For this exercise to be successful, ECOWAS Heads of State had long ago agreed that ECOMOG should be reinforced with troops from other ECOWAS countries not already participating in ECOMOG who would be deployed into NPFL areas for the encampment and disarmament exercises. It is estimated that at least five battalions additional to the nine already on the ground would be required. Upon the signature of a new ceasefire agreement by the warring parties, following the projected talks, ECOMOG would reassume its original mandate of peacekeeping. The expectation is that the Field Commander, in making deployment for such peacekeeping in the NPFL area, would make substantial use of the reinforcements in order to facilitate the encampment and disarmament exercises. The deployment of the United Nations military observers at the same time would be no less crucial.

Such reinforcement is crucial to the peace process, in particular the implementation of the Yamoussoukro IV Accord. However, African countries which have been approached and have shown a willingness to contribute troops have emphasized their inability to finance the participation of their troops. Moreover, ECOWAS countries already participating in ECOMOG have also made clear their need for help in meeting the future cost of ECOMOG operations. Such help, it is generally strongly believed, should come from the international community, especially the donor countries.

This is at least one area where the overwhelming opinion both among Liberians and in the rest of Africa, is that the United States should be substantially engaged. First, because it is the world's leading nation. Second, because Liberia has traditionally been the turf of the United States and Liberians have always looked to that country in their time of need. It is therefore the expectation of the whole of Africa that the United States should play a veritable leadership role, particularly to ensure and guarantee the success of the current round of negotiations which, hopefully, would lead to a ceasefire, disarmament and elections in Liberia. It is perhaps pertinent to note that the ECOWAS peace initiative has been in existence since August 1990—nearly three years—involving enormous expenditures by ECOMOG nations. To date, the United States direct contribution to this ECOWAS effort is only US\$8.6 million.

The second strategy agreed upon by ECOWAS leaders is the deployment of UN military observers. The Security Council has already indicated its willingness to accede to this request. It is envisaged that these observers would take up positions, along with ECOMOG, to ensure the effective encampment, disarmament and demobilization of the combatants of the warring parties.

CONCLUSION

ECOWAS leaders have thus far shown immeasurable patience, tact and perseverance. No fewer than a dozen summit meetings have been held by them on the Liberian crisis alone, and a considerably larger number of meetings at the level of Foreign Ministers. A few more meetings will, no doubt, be necessary before the crisis is finally and conclusively resolved.

It is my considered opinion that, with the support of the OAU and the UN, and especially the backing of the donor community under the leadership of the United States, the ECOWAS Peace Plan for the resolution of the Liberian conflict can be successfully implemented, leading to a just and durable peace underpinned by democratic elections.

STATEMENT OF KEVIN GEORGE, PRESIDENT, FRIENDS OF LIBERIA

Friends of Liberia (FOL) is very pleased to present its written testimony to the Senate Foreign Affairs Committee's Subcommittee on African Affairs concerning the policy of the U.S. Government on Liberia.

Friends of Liberia has undertaken three fact-finding missions to Liberia since April, 1991. I headed the two-person FOL delegation on the most recent of these FOL fact-finding missions, from May 23 to June 2, 1993.

The purpose of FOL's latest visit to Liberia was to assess conditions within Liberia with the aim of developing programs in Liberia that would lead to democratic

governance, peace and the rebuilding of the nation. In Liberia, the FOL delegation joined the Carter Center of Emory University, the International Foundation for Electoral Systems, and the National Democratic Institute, for 3-days of talks with Liberian interest groups, government officials, and representatives of international organizations working in Liberia. The purpose of these talks was to begin to coordinate the activities of U.S.-based organizations interested in promoting peace and democracy in Liberia with indigenous nonpolitical interest groups. The shared belief of the four U.S. organizations is that even in the middle of this civil war, efforts can be undertaken, such as civic education and democratic-institution building, that will prepare the country for the day of rule by a democratically elected government.

I was fortunate to meet with a wide range of notable persons during my latest visit to the country. These persons included Dr. Amos Sawyer, President of the Interim Government of National Unity, Mr. Bismark Kuyon, Speaker of the Interim Assembly, Mr. Trevor Gordon-Somers, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, and Mr. Ross Mountain, Special Emergency Coordinator for the United Nations. Regrettably, a planned meeting in Abidjan with a representative of the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) did not materialize.

I also valued the time I had to speak frankly with large numbers of less prominent Liberians who are attempting to survive the civil war, now 3½ years old.

I would like to proceed with my testimony in three parts. First, I would like to briefly share my observations about current conditions in Liberia. Second, I will testify about areas where the United States should proceed with caution. Third, I will suggest a course of action that this Subcommittee and the U.S. Government should take in respect to Liberia.

I. CURRENT CONDITIONS IN LIBERIA

I am sure that the subcommittee is shocked by the recently reported massacre of 250 to 300 displaced persons outside of Monrovia in the area known as Harbel. This was a terrible event and the responsible party must be condemned. This event, like the killing this past October of the five American nuns belonging to the Adorers of the Blood of Christ, characterizes the brutality of Liberia's civil war. It is a brutality that Liberians must live with on a daily basis, but which Americans only read about in their newspapers when the killing reaches certain proportions.

We should not risk categorizing this civil war as just another bloodbath caused by Liberians. The truth is that innocent civilians have been approximately 90 percent of the casualties in this war that continues to be waged by a relatively small number of combatants. There should be no misunderstanding, the vast majority of Liberians are peace loving and have not participated in the senseless killing.

Monrovia has absorbed the brunt of the fighting in this civil war. Its population, swollen by those fleeing the fighting in other areas of the country, is estimated to be at least one-million, almost double the pre-war population. Displaced persons camps, such as the one at Harbel, host hundreds of thousands in the fragile security perimeter that is dotted by Monrovia's suburbs with names like Garnersville, Paynesville, and Caldwell.

Liberians refer to their civil war as the first civil war and the second civil war. The first civil war refers to the period between December, 1989, and the November, 1990, ceasefire agreement signed in Bamako, Mali. The second civil war alludes to the period dating from the NPFL's October 15 attack on Monrovia, in which it came extremely close to driving away the Economic Community Monitoring Force (ECOMOG) that protects the city.

I have observed a dramatic change in the attitude of Liberians living in Monrovia from that in April, 1991, when I travelled to the country. In 1991, Liberians appeared much more willing to forgive all factions associated with Liberia's civil war with the hope that peace was around the corner. Liberians in Monrovia now place the blame for the second part of the civil war on Charles Taylor and the NPFL.

One man, whose house had been in Caldwell, the area in which the NPFL launched its fiercest post-October 15 attacks on the city, was destroyed by a bomb dropped by an ECOMOG jet fighter-bomber. The man, who had saved for thirty years to build the house, said "I do not blame ECOMOG for the destruction of my house. It was the NPFL fighters who shot ECOMOG soldiers from my house that are to blame. If the rebels had not attacked Monrovia in October, I would still have my house." Like most Liberians I had met, this man, whose son and sister were killed in the fighting, not only lost his house, but close family members.

Food is available in Monrovia due to the well-organized efforts of international organizations, assisted by local nongovernmental organizations, to distribute U.S. donated rice. It is water that is the most precious commodity due to the NPFL attacks on the White Plains water facility.

Liberians living in the far off areas of the country, like Grand Gedeh County, Maryland County, and Lofa County, have been isolated by the recent fighting and almost certainly face food shortages. This isolation of the rural areas of Liberia has been complicated by the refusal of ECOMOG and the Interim Government of National Unity to permit relief supplies to flow across the Ivory Coast border directly into NPFL areas and by the NPFL's refusal to accept relief supplies transferred through ECOMOG controlled areas.

Although ECOMOG states that the security situation in Monrovia and its environs is under control, it was evident that there was great fear of infiltration by the NPFL. A 7:00 PM to 7:00 AM curfew is strictly enforced throughout the city. However, not only the NPFL is feared by the population. The other factions to the war, ULIMO and the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL) are armed and present in the city. It is the AFL, whose members fought alongside the late Samuel Doe, that is particularly feared. The AFL is widely believed to be responsible for theft and looting that is taking place by armed bands under cover of curfew.

Amidst the horror of the war, there are bright spots. After three years, children are once again attending schools in Monrovia. Their schools lack electricity, roofs and books, but the routine of being in school gives Liberians and their children a sense of normalcy, a respite from the war.

Another bright spot is the growth of nongovernmental, nonpolitical organizations and interests groups in Monrovia. These organizations, many of them community based, are forming to meet a variety of humanitarian and civic needs. Some promote peace and democracy, other assist in food distribution, and still others develop programs to assist children affected psychologically and physically by the war.

There is tremendous physical suffering in Liberia especially among the one-third of the population that is displaced within the country. Another third of the population is living under equally miserably conditions in neighboring countries. Almost every structure in Monrovia still standing is pock-marked with bullet holes and bears witness to the massive amounts of firepower involved in this war. However, the greatest suffering is emotional. There is an acute fear among Liberians that their lives will never return to normal. The memories of atrocities witnessed by every Liberian haunt the vast majority of Liberians who yearn for peace.

I was not surprised that the word "peace" is used by Liberians on a daily basis. It was astonishing though that the word "democracy" has become a word used almost as frequently in the new civil war vocabulary of Liberians, even those not formally educated. Democracy in its simplest form is understood by a wide range of Liberians as meaning that one person will not ever again control their government against their will. Liberians want peace and to begin the work of reconstructing a new Liberia. Encouraging to me was a recognition among everyday Liberians that peace, in order to last, must also be accompanied by democracy.

II. A WORD OF CAUTION

The Liberian civil war is complex. It now involves two-factions within the group known as ULIMO, the remnants of the Armed Forces of Liberia, and a group known as the Nimba Redemption Council pitted against Charles Taylor's National Patriotic Front of Liberia. ECOMOG has been able to seize significant territory from Taylor's NPFL mainly because of assistance from ULIMO and the AFL. Meanwhile, the Interim Government of National Unity attempts to extend its jurisdiction to the territories taken from the NPFL.

The NPFL's refusal to disarm in accordance with the Yamoussoukro Accords has been viewed as the major obstacle to peace. However, it would be a mistake for policy makers to overlook the importance of bringing other warring factions into the peace process. For example, ULIMO was never brought into the Yamoussoukro process. ULIMO's conflict with the NPFL in the western areas of Liberia contributed to the military tension that precipitated the October 15 attack by Taylor on Monrovia. Despite the arms embargo on Liberia mandated by Security Council Resolution 788, ULIMO continues to be well-supplied with arms. It is disturbing that the faction of ULIMO led by Alhaji Kromah appears reluctant to turn over territory it controls to the interim government or to ECOMOG.

I would note that I have the highest regard for Dr. Amos Sawyer, president of the interim government. I believe he is a man that does not have political motive or ambition beyond the immediate job of heading the interim government. He truly desires peace in his country. His difficult task of governing an "umbrella" government representing the range of political parties in Liberia has led to restoration of some public services and a semblance of order in Monrovia. Although some well-intentioned advocates of peace may call for the recognition of the Interim Government of National Unity by the U.S. Government, there is merit in the view that formal

recognition of IGNU as the official government may actually antagonize the political and military situation in the country and lessen the potential role of the United States as a mediator. Although the United States should strongly support the concept of an interim government, it seems prudent that the recognition of any government in Liberia by the United States should be conditioned on Liberia making significant progress toward democratic governance.

III. U.S. GOVERNMENT POLICY: A RECOMMENDED COURSE OF ACTION

I believe that there is an opportunity for the U.S. Government to initiate new and positive elements into its foreign policy that foster peace and democracy in Liberia. There are not any magic solutions to the war. I remain convinced, however, that this war can be ended through negotiation. Bringing a peaceful end to this war will require hard work and the full-cooperation of the Interim Government of National Unity, the warring Liberian factions, ECOWAS, the United Nations and the U.S. Government. Half-hearted measures by any of these entities, including the United States, may only contribute to prolong the war.

As the largest donor organization to Liberia now and in the past, the United States has a strong interest in a Liberia that is peaceful, democratic and economically viable. The historic relationship of the United States and Liberia also engenders certain mutual obligations.

It is apparent that the ECOWAS-initiated peace process needs international support in order to succeed. Certainly, the United States should support the attempt by ECOWAS to secure peace within the subregion. However, support for the efforts of this fledgling regional organization should not be confused with the ultimate goal of achieving peace in Liberia. The United Nations and the United States should use all diplomatic means at their disposal to assist in the reaffirmation of the Yamoussoukro Accords by the warring parties.

The Yamoussoukro Accords are widely-recognized as espousing the basic blueprint leading to peace and free and fair elections in Liberia. However, it is also recognized that the security and disarmament provisions of the accords require strengthening and improvement.

Free and fair elections in Liberia must be the ultimate goal, but they must be preceded by complete disarmament.

With these thoughts in mind, Friends of Liberia recommends the following actions by the U.S. Government.

A. ACHIEVING PEACE

The policy of the U.S. Government in respect to Liberia should continue to emphasize an immediate ceasefire, disarmament by all Liberian warring parties, internal security, and, the holding of free and fair elections. There are specific actions that the United States can take to achieve these goals.

1. **Opening Dialogue Between the Parties.**—The U.S. Government should actively promote the reopening of dialogue between the warring parties and the Interim Government of National Unity. The goal of such dialog should be the establishment of a ceasefire observed by all parties to the conflict. This effort should be led by the United States at the highest levels of the Department of State in conjunction with the representatives of the United Nations and ECOWAS. This dialogue should be opened through private talks chaired by the Secretary General of the United Nations and involving the leaders of the NPFL, ULIMO, the AFL, and the interim government.

2. **United Nations Disarmament Force.**—It is evident that trust between warring parties and a peacekeeping/peacemaking force is an essential ingredient in the process of disarmament. Disarmament will remain a difficult issue in Liberia if the entire burden of implementing this task is placed on the shoulders of ECOWAS. Another option is available without destroying the effectiveness of ECOWAS as a regional peacekeeper.

The United Nations should be prepared to offer significant assistance in the form of a force dedicated to disarming all warring parties. The U.S. Government should be prepared to support the speedy establishment of a sizable, well-armed, well-trained, United Nations force for Liberia composed of forces from outside of the West Africa and, if necessary, including forces of the United States military. A United Nations disarmament force should be authorized to use all necessary force to achieve its aims. Such a force could work in conjunction with the existing ECOMOG forces to assist with internal and external security, but should have primary responsibility for disarmament of all Liberian warring parties.

Taylor has indicated that he would disarm to a force other than ECOMOG. ECOWAS has already indicated a desire for a stronger supportive role by the United Nations. The willingness of the United Nations and the United States to support

a disarmament force would be a true test of Taylor's sincerity and provide a boost to the ECOWAS initiated peace process. The greatest mistake that could be made is if the parties to the conflict desire such assistance in the form of a disarmament force but the United Nations fails to act because of financial constraints.

3. Free and Fair Elections.—The U.S. Government should promote free and fair elections in Liberia as the key element of its new policy in respect to Liberia. To do so, it must be prepared to support the undergirding of democratic institutions at every level in the country.

4. High-Level Recognition of Liberia as a Concern of the United States.—The relationship between Liberia and the United States has often been called a special relationship because of the historic roots of the Republic of Liberia. Liberians continue to have tremendous respect and admiration for the United States despite disappointment over the United States' failure to play an official role in efforts to end their civil war.

Unfortunately, the Bush administration did not place Liberia high on its list of foreign affairs priorities. President Bush did not ever publicly speak about the conflict in Liberia. Former Secretary of State James Baker III never publicly spoke about the conflict in Liberia. This lack of high-level concern for Liberia among the top leadership of the U.S. Government was perceived by Liberians as abandonment and may have fostered a continuation of the conflict.

President Clinton and Secretary of State Warren Christopher should actively encourage the parties to the conflict in Liberia to observe a ceasefire. A public statement by President Clinton would go a long way toward assuring Liberians that they have not been abandoned by the United States and that peace in their country is a priority of the U.S. Government.

B. RECONSTRUCTION

There is an opportunity for a "new" Liberia to emerge from the ashes of this horrendous civil war. This new Liberia could be a model of democratic governance, economic growth, social justice and the observation of human rights. In short, it could be the model of good government that is so rare in Africa. However, unless this opportunity for rebuilding Liberia is seized, the country could just as easily slip into the malaise of the past characterized by corrupt and unrepresentative government, a lack of economic growth, and social injustice. The following policies and practices should be undertaken by the U.S. Government to encourage and promote positive change in the Liberia that emerges from civil war.

1. Emphasize and Focus Upon Liberia in Foreign Policy.—The United States should have Liberia as a priority on its foreign policy agenda. The goal should be to fully support the rebuilding of Liberia without encouraging dependence on the United States. A partnership between the United States and this nation founded by freed slaves with the backing of influential Americans would ultimately yield mutual benefits given Liberia's traditional value as an American "sister" on the African continent and its assets in rubber, iron ore and tropical rain forest. The Clinton administration should acknowledge the history of Liberia's relationship with the United States from the 1920s, through World War II, the Cold War and through the Doe regime in the 1980s, and its current value to United States interests in Africa.

2. An Action Plan For United States Support for Liberia.—An action plan for United States support for reconstruction in Liberia should be developed at the earliest possible date. This action plan should identify the linkage of economic development, reconstruction and democratic governance, and the extent that the U.S. Government will support the reconstruction of a "new" Liberia. Future financial assistance should be carefully monitored and to the greatest extent possible passed through non-governmental organizations and private organizations in Liberia.

3. Debt Forgiveness.—Liberia cannot hope to achieve reconstruction without some form of debt forgiveness. At present, Liberia's external debt is said to total \$3.5 billion, including approximately \$221 million owed to the U.S. Government, \$600 million to the IMF and \$120 million to the World Bank. Between \$75 and \$100 thousand is added to this outstanding amount each month that the debt remains unserviced.

Under the Brooke Amendment, funding by the U.S. Government can only be applied to emergency humanitarian assistance to Liberia and in limited amounts to programs that undergird democracy. This means, for example, that schools and clinics cannot be rebuilt. Friends of Liberia has urged that once peace is achieved and a democratic government installed, the U.S. Government should forgive the debt owed by the Government of Liberia and encourage debt-forgiveness and liberal rescheduling of payments by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund.

The immediate problem is that the U.S. Government cannot dedicate funds to worthy reconstruction projects that "look and smell" like infrastructure development. Presuming that it would be difficult to achieve a waiver of the Brooke restrictions at this point, I urge the Congress and the Administration to support emergency legislation that would permit U.S. government funds to be channeled through non-governmental organizations to support reconstruction in the country that is aimed at restoring basic medical and educational services, and the rebuilding of schools, clinics and other basic infrastructure in Liberia. If we want to foster long-term peace in Liberia, Liberia must start rebuilding now. We must be there to help in this effort. The task of reconstructing Liberia cannot wait until peace.

4. An Enhanced Role for AID and the Peace Corps.—U.S. Government development agencies such as the Agency for International Development and the U.S. Peace Corps should begin now preparing for an enhanced role in Liberia. The Peace Corps, long heralded by Liberians as a trusted and invaluable friend, should be reintroduced to Liberia as soon as there is disarmament and free and fair elections.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

Because of its special standing, the U.S. Government has opportunities, unavailable to other governments and organizations, to promote peace in Liberia. As citizens of the United States who have lived and served in Liberia, the 650 members of Friends of Liberia believe that our government's heightened involvement in the search for peace in Liberia is critical and long-overdue. The maintenance of the status quo will not suffice. Now is the time for new and positive initiatives that promote lasting peace in Liberia.

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